The Protestant Peace-Maker:

OR, A

SEASONABLE PERSUASIVE

To all Serious

CHRISTIANS,

Who call themselves

PROTESTANTS,

That laying aside Calumnies, and all exasperating Disputes, they would pursue

Charity, Peace, and Union,

As the only Means (now left us) of *Safety* and *Reformation* of the Publick Manners. —— 1.

The Cry of Holinesse for Peace. —— 35.

With a

POSTSCRIPT, or *NOTES* on Mr. *Baxter*'s, and some Others late Writings for *Peace*. —— 67.

BY

EDWARD Lord Bishop of *Cork* and *Ross*, in *Ireland*.

London, Printed for *Robert Clavell* at the *Peacock* in St. *Paul*'s Church-yard, 1682.

An Advertiſement.

THE *Papers* following came lately to my *Hands*, and finding them contain many things very *extraordinary*, and highly *ſeaſonable* at this Juncture, and writ with exceeding good and *peaceable Deſign*, and with great *Temper*, and no leſs ſenſe of *Piety*; I thought fit to make 'em Publick.

Febr. 14. 1681. *R. W.*

ERRATA.

Pag. 24. line 22. for lightest, read *higheſt*. p. 98. l. 1. r. all *he*. & l. 13. r. *methodos*. p. 99. l. ult. r. his *Prayer*. p. 100. l. 22. dele *it*. p. 107. l. 22. r. *my* conſent. & l. 31. r have *refuſed* to do. p. 110. l. 25. r. *my* Miniſtry. & l. 28. r. *as* theſe. p. 111. l. 5 & 9. r. Celeuſma. & l. 27. r. *wildly* out.

The Text.

II SAM. XV. 11.

And with Abſalom *went Two hundred men out of* Jeruſalem *that were called; and they went in their ſimplicity, and they knew not any thing.*

IN the preſent ſtate of things, he that would deſign the greateſt publick Service, will perhaps upon due conſideration ſcarce find any thing more worthy his fixing on, than to endeavour to ſweeten the Minds of men of *one* Faction towards thoſe of *another*; to take off and abate thoſe bitter apprehenſions and conceits, thoſe Heats and Furies, with which they mutually ſtand enraged.

My purpoſe is at preſent to do, what in an hours time I can, thereto: And that I may ſucceed therein the better, I will deſire, that while I open my Text, you will be pleaſed to ſuſpend your Cenſures of any other deſign which you may imagine I have; not to think I had, in the choice thereof, any Eye at the preſent *Plot*, or any *Great ones* ſuppoſed

to be concerned therein: for by the ſequel of my Diſcourſe it will appear, I had not. I only intend to make ſuch Obſervations upon the Text, as ſhall moſt naturally conduce to the End I propounded.

The Words are a ſmall paſſage in the Hiſtory of *Abſalom*'s *Conſpiracy*. In Chap. 14 33. we find *Abſalom* reſtored to the Kings favour: and the firſt uſe he makes of it is, with more ſecurity and facility to lay a wicked deſign againſt his Crown and Life. Firſt, he endeavours to make himſelf conſiderable: he Attracts the Peoples *Eyes* by a Princely Grandure and Retinue; (*He prepared himſelf Chariots and Horſes, and Fifty men to run before him*, ver. 1.) and then their *Hearts* by crafty Inſinuations. He calumniates (but with a ſeeming tenderneſs and modeſty) his Fathers Government, condoles the Peoples Grievances, ſhews a Zeal for their redreſs; and all this with the moſt obliging Condeſcenſions and the faireſt Speeches imaginable: *He riſes up early and ſtands by the way of the Gate*, where People paſt to the Court for Juſtice: *and if any came nigh him, to do him obeyſance, he put forth his hand and took him and kiſſed him. And when any man that had a Controverſie came to the King for Judgment; ſee* (ſaith he) *thy matters are good and right, but there is no man deputed of the King to hear thee. Oh! that I were Judge in the Land, I would do yon Juſtice.* From v. 2, to 6. In a word no Art, by which he might fix Negligence or Male-adminiſtration on his Father, or recommend himſelf as a ſweet, diligent and hopeful Prince, is omitted: And by this means *had he ſtole the Hearts of the men of* Iſrael.

After

After *Forty years* the Buſineſs is ripe, and an Hypocritical pretence of *Religion* gives it Birth. Abſalom *ſaid unto the King, I pray thee, let me go and pay my Vow which I have vowed unto the Lord in* Hebron; *for thy Servant vowed a Vow while I abode at* Geſhur *in* Syria, *ſaying, If the Lord ſhall bring me again indeed to* Jeruſalem, *then will I ſerve the Lord*, ver. 7, 8. And having obtained and taken his leave at Court, away he goes for *Hebron*. But now not a word more of *Religion*; (for what have men of aſpiring and Treaſonable deſigns to do with it, any further than the Pretence of it ſerves their Intereſt?) no *Vow* ſhall you hear of perform'd, except perhaps by a Mental reſervation his Vow were to do all that might be to take off the King. The Crown was the *God he ſerved*, and to make his acceſs thereto, the King was to be the Sacrifice. He therefore ſtrengthens his Party all he can, *ſends Spies throughout all the Tribes of* Iſrael, that they might be ready upon the firſt Voice of his being *Proclaimed*, and at the ſame time ſets forward himſelf. *And with* Abſalom *went Two hundred Men out of* Jeruſalem *that were called; and they went in, &c.*

Now upon this laſt Verſe it is that I am to make my *Obſervations*, having nothing to do with, nor any applications to make of any thing elſe in the ſtory. And they ſhall be only two, of thoſe upon the *Character* of theſe *Two hundred of* Abſalom's *Followers*, and upon their *Cauſe*; the *one* of which (namely their *Character*) ſeems really *good*, and the *other* was ſtark *naught*.

I obſerve then, Firſt, *Men of a right honeſt Intention may be eaſily drawn into the Society of the vileſt Cauſe. They went in their ſimplicity.* The Original

is a little more emphatical הלכים לחסם, *They went in their Integrity. Integrity* is more than *Simplicity.* They went only to bring the Heir apparent, and the Kings Darling, out of the Town, or to accompany him to his Devotions, and *knew no more* of the Design; though in the mean while their Company gives encouragement and furtherance to one of the vileſt Cauſes in the World, the moſt ungrateful and unnatural Treaſon the Sun ever ſaw.

I add, Secondly, *Such mens honeſt Intentions will not juſtifie their Engagements and Practices in the Society of a Wicked party.*

Theſe two Propoſitions I ſhall apply meerely towards the pacifying or allaying *Religious Diſſentions*, at leaſt towards the uniting honeſt mens hearts and affections; nor ſhall I meddle one word with the croſs intereſts or fewds of *State*, from which *Good Lord deliver us.*

Firſt then, *Men of honeſt Intentions may be drawn into fellowſhip of very wicked Factions*, and ſometimes more eaſily perhaps than others. To aſſert this, I ſhall only deſire you to reflect on the Ordinary *Methods* of inveigling or drawing in men of Religion into Parties, and together upon the *Natural Infelicities* of ſuch mens *Tempers.*

The great Art of Religious bewitching men into Parties, lies in the dextrous application of fine *Promiſes* and *Pretences.* *By good words and fair Speeches* theſe Artiſans *deceive the hearts of the ſimple*, or of the הלכים בחסם, *Men that walk in their Integrity*, as in the Text.

Rom. xvi. 18.

The

The *Promiſes* in matter of Religion (to which again I admoniſh my Diſcourſe confines it ſelf) are uſually,

1. *Of greater Purity.*
2. *Of more Chriſtian Liberty.*

And though it be very true, that the ſober, plain, ſtrict Chriſtianity, which we know conſiſts in an holy heart and life, poſſeſſes men really of the moſt of theſe ſo great promiſed goods; yet is there not the wildeſt, vileſt Religion in the World, the Profeſſors whereof are not ſtill cracking of theſe Golden Mountains, whereſoever they have any hopes of Proſelytes. They will *promiſe you liberty*, though at the ſame time *themſelves are the Servants of corruption*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 19. Their *Mouth* ſhall *ſpeak great ſwelling words* (of perfection, perhaps) and they ſhall *ſeparate themſelves*, though all the while they are *ſenſual, not having the Spirit*, Jude *v.* 16 19. In all probability the language I uſe was meant of the old *Gnoſticks*; and impurer ſlaves of Villany cannot well be conceived than they were, notwithſtanding theſe ſo contrary Promiſes.

The *Pretences* commonly are of the greateſt Zeal and Love for their Souls, whom they would gain to themſelves. Thus the falſe Apoſtles in *Galat.* iv 17. *They zealouſly affect you——yea they would exclude us, that you might affect them.* (ſo with ſome good Copies I read thoſe words.)

Now *Liberty* is a tempting bait to all men; and what more proper to draw in men of honeſt hearts, than *Sanctity* and *Purity*? Eſpecially when all is ſet off with the greateſt Love to mens better parts, when 'tis pleaded by thoſe that would win them, that

that it is the Persons thus to be brought in that will be the great gainers, that themselves have no interest of their own, at least none secular, or of this World.

Such plausible *Topicks* as these can scarce fail of being effectual, if we consider what was the second member desired to be reflected on, some *Infelicities* naturally attending the *temper* of good and honest-hearted men.

As 1. *Easiness*, *Sweetness* and *Ductility*. They are not, nor haply ever have been, conscious to themselves of such Falseness as rules and actuates others; therefore do they scarce imagine it incident unto Christian men; they being the properties of *Charity* (of which Grace such mens hearts are full) *to bear all things*, *believe all things*, *hope all things* (1 Cor. 13. 7.) and especially, where yet nothing appears evident to the contrary, to believe and hope the best, these kind of men too readily swallow the bait. For it is plain, this their Christian temper renders them at once *less Suspicious* and *more Credulous*.

Nor is it to be denied (2.) That in many men of very honest hearts there is more *short-sightedness*, and *want of judgment*, than is commonly found in persons of much worse Morals. The uprightest men are not ever the profoundest: It is not given to all to smell Consequences at a great distance. Even in the beginning of Christianity, when the Evidences of it were more fresh, and the Power more miraculous, *Not many of the wise men after the flesh were called*, 1 *Cor.* 1.27. And be sure *Artis est celare artem* in this case also; the Persons, who practise, remove at first as far as may be out of reach, not only the downright mischievous and wicked part of their design, but

but whatever might give jealouſie or ſuſpicion thereof. Theſe poor men in the Text heard of a *Vow*, but not a word of a *Conſpiracy*.

To be brief, (3.) *Inconſideration*, *Half-conſideration*, or perhaps *Prejudicate conſideration*, may betray men of very ſincere Minds into very unwarrantable Cauſes and Practices. The firſt and ſecond of theſe, namely *Inconſideracy*, or *Half-conſidering*, muſt needs be admitted in theſe men here following *Abſalom*; and the laſt of theſe, *viz. Prejudice*, and the force of it, no mans Honeſty forthwith exempts him from, though by degrees it may work it out. Education, Cuſtom, Affection to their own Countrymen and Laws, fear of diſpleaſing, &c. ſo clouded the Judgments (at leaſt ſwayed the Practice) even of St. *Peter* and *Barnabas*, that they went aſide to ſome acts of *Judaiſm* (*Gal.* 2. 11, 12, 13, 14.) *They walked not uprightly*, but were *to be blamed*, and even *others* were *carried away with their diſſimulation*.

Upon the whole now, ſuppoſing thoſe who ſtudy to make or maintain Parties, have the Art (which few of them want) to apply ſuch *Promiſes* and *Pretences*, as above-mentioned, to honeſt men (of *ſweet* and *Charitable tempers* indeed, but not of the *deepeſt Judgments*, and beſides a little *inconſiderate* (naturally perhaps) and by an unlucky Age or juncture of Circumſtances prejudiced too) it will move no reaſonable perſons wonder, though it may do his pity, that ſuch men ſhould be thus led aſide.

I have now proved my *firſt Obſervation* ſufficiently for my deſign, and give me leave briefly to *apply* it thereto. Application.

I

I therefore humbly and passionately Expostulate with persons of all sorts, who will be just to their own Reason, whether this Consideration, *That men of upright and sincere intention may be*, many times, *drawn in into a bad Cause or Party*, deserve so much their *Indignation*, as Affections contrary, namely *Commiseration* and *Compassion*. Even the *Laws* themselves (I mean the *Civil Laws*) distinguish betwixt mens *Crimes* and their *Misfortunes*. The Philosopher is yet more accurate, and puts a difference betwixt *Misfortunes*, *Faults*, and *Injuries*. *Misfortunes*, saith he, are such which are neither done with ill intent, nor could be foreseen. *Faults*, which might have been foreseen, but were done with no ill intent. *Injuries* (or downright vicious acts) are such which are designed, and done with evil intent. When therefore we see men engaged in a Profession and way which to us seems gross, let it suffice us at first to judge of the *Cause* they are in, and that according to evidence; and because all is not yet clear as to their *Persons*, to suspend as to them any severe and merciless Sentence, let us be content to think the men no more guilty than their circumstances, (which too may be to us much unknown) do make them. We understand not (*first*) what *intentions* they carry, perhaps as honest as they are capable of. Nor *secondly*, what *Temptations* were upon them, how far they have been practiced on. Nor yet again, what Natural or Morally unavoidable, *Infelicities* they are or have been under. For these and many other Reasons we are not, we cannot be their Judges. Especially, we want Authority, we have not yet our Commission, the season is not yet come. *Judge nothing before the time*, 1 Cor. iv. 5. Admit the Saints are to *judge the*

L. Perspiciendum D. de Pœnis.

Rhetoric. l. 1. c. 13.

the World; 'tis only as *Assessors of Christ*: Let us stay then till *the Lord come*, and wait our time. Things are not yet ripe, nor come to light: We may adjudge that to be mens *Crime* which is not so much as their *fault*, if all could be duly opened. Much more Iniquitous will it be after such immature, unwarrantable and hard Sentence past, to pursue them, whom we have thus censured with such irreconcileable heats and keeness; which, if all were true that we have too rashly judged, would be more than perhaps, even in such case, Christianity would allow.

But admit there were *some* particular Persons, of the Factions we dislike, every whit as bad as their cause, *incorrigibly guilty* and uncurable; yet can we perswade our selves *All* are so? 'Tis a bad Religion indeed, of which there are none good: And perhaps amongst all those several Professions which lay a claim to the style of *Christian*, there is none so bad in which some excellency is not to be found; If we survey all impartially and with Candour, haply in each we may discover *Peculiar Commendables*: In *Nonconformists*, *Fervour in Prayer*, *Indefatigableness in Holy duties*, *Care in instructing and governing their Families*, *strict observation of the Lords day*, &c. besides a great deal of *Negative Sanctity* at the least: No Profaneness, no common Swearing, Cursing, or the like. In *Quakers*, *Plainess of habit*, general *simplicity*, *modesty*, and *frugality* of living, *Reverence of Oaths* (even to excess) *Faithfulness in their words*, and perhaps divers other good qualities, which occur not to me now. Even in the *Papists* themselves, amongst the very Common People, at some seasons, what *Mortification*, *Fasting*, *Abstinence*, *Obedience to Superiours* (though blind?)

And in a multitude of those of their *Religious Orders*, what frequent, what *Zealous devotions*, what *strictness perpetually*, what *Self-denial*, *Observance of Vows* (though those perhaps in many rash and highly insnaring, and generally of things beyond what the Christian Law ever intended to enjoyn) what *strange abandoning of their own wills*, though too often to the conduct of those, who are much worse than themselves? But in these several sorts mentioned, can any say, *All* are *Hypocritical* in these Observances? The *Pharisees* in our Lords time were a vile Sect, insomuch that, from them then, *Phariſaism* is become a name for Pride, Vain-glory, Hypocrisie, and many such qualities concurring in one cursed mixture: But even amongst them in those very daies was there a *Nicodemus*, a *Zacheus*, a *Joseph of Arimathea*, nay a *Paul* too, and perhaps divers more, whose Names the Holy Ghost did not think fit to honour in Sacred Records. Let us not therefore with such unlimited *Zeal* (which for want of *Omniſciency* must needs be sometimes *without knowledge*) run against whole Parties; but only against Crimes and Criminals. Let us temper our Resolution with Christian pity, Gentleness, Charity, and the consequents hereof, hoping and believing the best; *Of some have compassion, making a difference* betwixt the Abused and the Abusers, being readier to save as many as we can by *pulling them out of the fire*, than to give any up for lost, and call for *Fire* down *from Heaven* upon them. As amongst the *Gnosticks* of old, so amongst those of the vilest Professions amongst us, there may be *many who have not known the depths of Satan*, or at least who would be glad fairly to be drawn out of them.

Jude verſ. 22.

Revel. 2. 24.

But

But I have too long I fear inſiſted on this general. From moving *Pity* therefore unto others, let us proceed to take *Caution* as to our ſelves. For the ſecond thing we obſerv'd upon the matter related in the Text was, that *Honeſt intentions* will *not juſtifie* mens *engaging* or *proceeding* in an *ill Cauſe*. They do undoubtedly before God, in ſome conſiderable meaſure, *extenuate* the *guilt*; and 'tis fit that before humane Juſtice, when they really appear, they ſhould prevail for *alleviating puniſhment*. But that, which is in its own nature evil, will be evil ſtill; though a man of upright heart was ſurprized or betray'd thereinto.

Firſt, If the Matter be more properly againſt *God*, although the mans Intentions were right, it will be an Act of Impiety, and ſo, though a *ſin of Ignorance*, yet a *ſin* ſtill: No man will maintain Ignorance warrants an Act; nay it does not fully excuſe it: *He that knew not and did commit things worthy of ſtripes, was* to be *beaten*, though but *with few ſtripes*, Luke xii. 48. And it will be difficult to aſſign a good reaſon why that paſſage ſhould not be interpreted of *Invincible Ignorance:* though (God knows) the Ignorance of this Age and Nation muſt be imputed generally to Idleneſs, Heedleſsneſs, Stubborneſs, or Affectation: And theſe are ſuch Excuſes and Pleas as no wiſe man would be fond of, or can hope will mend his caſe. In the Old Law, *The Soul which committed a Treſpaſs and ſinned, even through Ignorance, in the Holy things of the Lord, was to bring his Treſpaſs Offering to the Sanctuary:* And beſides that, to make amends alſo for the harm that he had done in the Holy thing, and *add the fifth part thereto and give it to the Prieſt*; Not till this was

done was the Prieſt to make Attonement for him, nor without Attonement thus made would it be forgiven him. *Levit.*V.15,16.

Again, If the matter more directly be againſt my *Neighbour*, 'tis truly and really *Treſpaſs* or *Hurt*, though I did not intend it as ſuch; nor is his damage the leſs, becauſe I deſigned it not: And therefore alſo under the Law, Reſtitution and Sacrifice was to be made in caſe of *Treſpaſſes of Ignorance* againſt *man*, as well as againſt *God*. *If a Soul ſwear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good* [we muſt ſupply (as is apparent by the ſcope of the Context) *in matters appertaining to his Neighbour*] *whatſoever it is that the man ſhall pronounce with an Oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth it, then ſhall he be guilty*; that is, obliged to Sacrifice and Reſtitution for the Treſpaſs of his Ignorance, *Levit.*V.4. That, I ſay, this Text is to be interpreted of Common matters betwixt man and man, and not of the Holy or Devoted things, is evident by its Antitheſis to *verſ.* 15, 16, above touched. And further, the parallel place (*Numb.*V.6,7,8.) which preſcribes expreſly the like amends, with addition of the *fifth part to the principal*, to be reſtored to him againſt whom the Treſpaſs was done, or in caſe of his being dead, to his next Kinſman, is an ample proof of the intent of the Law in this caſe. Acts, by which the Right and Property of God or our Neighbour is invaded or ſuffers, are really in the judgment of the Law of God, *Treſpaſſes*, though we did not intend a Treſpaſs, but were ignorant.

The

The ſame muſt I ſay, Thirdly, of ſins againſt *our own ſelves*. If I fall into a ſin againſt my ſelf, and ſuch perhaps by which I really ſcandal others (that is, Embolden or encourage them to do the like) my Honeſt intention takes not off the Nature of Sin, nor Reality of the Scandal. We will inſtance in *Drunkenneſs*; we cannot well deny that Charity to many of them, who (in the language of the World) ſometimes *play the good Fellows*; but to think, they do not ordinarily meet, with deſigns to make Beaſts of one another, much leſs deliberately do they drink to intoxicate their own Heads, and forfeit their Reaſon: yet if they, beyond their intention, do either the one or the other, can we excuſe them from Drunkenneſs, or (according to their Quality) from having given *ſcandal*, becauſe we cannot conceive them to have been deſignedly drunk? *Geneſ.* XI. 21, *&c. Noah's caſe* was a ſingular one (far I mean from admitting any of the ordinary circumſtances of Exceſſive drinking) yet who will acquit it either from *Sin* or *Scandal*?

Upon the whole then, Sin is Sin, notwithſtanding our Ignorance or Honeſt intentions.

But for fuller and more ſatisfactory proof hereof, I will ſet down, *what Particulars* are neceſſary to make an *Action* truly and Chriſtianly *Good* or warrantable: and if, when I have ſo done, it ſhall appear, that Honeſty of Intention is but *One* of the Points requiſite to the conſtituting any Action ſuch, I will then demand, It may be acknowledged, that mens Honeſt intentions do not juſtifie their engaging or proceeding in a bad Cauſe: For otherwiſe, where many conditions are required, one ſhould be all, that

is,

is, more than One. And the due ſtating this Queſtion (beſides the Evidence which it will give to the Propoſition in hand) will further ſatisfie an important doubt, which may ariſe upon the whole proof, thus: If my upright and Honeſt heart be not enough to juſtifie me in my engagements, or in the courſe that I take, What then further am I to look after, that I may throughly approve my ſelf to God and Man? This caſe many a Conſcientious perſon would be apt to put, when the Truth contended for were demonſtrated beyond all doubt: and therefore I ſhall truſt none will judge me extravagant, if I make the Reſolution hereof a ſecond Proof of the Obſervation I made.

Now in Anſwer hereto, I ſay, Firſt, That any Action may be truly good or warrantable, there is requiſite an *Intrinſecal Rectitude*, or Lawfulneſs, in the Nature of the thing. I take *Rectitude* here in a very large ſenſe, ſo as to exclude only all Obliquity or ſwerving from the Precept. Now ſuch *Rectitude* I affirm neceſſary; and indeed the Matter needs not (for it ſcarce admits) any proof, it approving it ſelf to our very Reaſon. Who can conceive, that what the Eternal Laws of God have made unlawful, any created or derivative Power can hallow or authorize? Nothing hinders, but in a Moral ſenſe we may apply hereto that of the Royal Preacher, *Conſider the work of God: Who can make that ſtraight which he hath made crooked?* Eccleſ. VII. 13. And ſuch Rectitude there is (1.) In all points which are matter of Command, and made our *Duties* by the Law of God or Nature. (2.) In all points of *Chriſtian Liberty*, or ſuch matters, which, being no wiſe forbidden unto us, are left to our diſcretion or prudential choice.

And

And divers ſuch Caſes there are in humane life, (whatever ſome men pretend to the contrary) in which, what part ſoever we take we ſin not. To perſons under certain circumſtances, ſays the Apoſtle, even touching ſo weighty a concern as *Marriage*, Let them *do what they will*, marry or marry not, in either *they ſin not*, 1 Cor. VII. 36. Again in caſe of diſtinction of Meats, under ſuch and ſuch circumſtances, *Meat commendeth us not to God: For neither if we eat, are we the better, or if we eat not, are we the worſe*, 1 Cor. VIII. 8. Of one of theſe two ſorts muſt the thing to be done be, in caſe the Action be good or warrantable.

Secondly, Though *Honeſt intention* do not juſtifie an evil Act or Cauſe, yet can no Act or cauſe, in which any man is engaged, be truly juſt without *ſuch intention:* And great care ought to be uſed herein, for that men are apt to flatter themſelves, and think better both of themſelves and their Intentions, than truly they deſerve. It is requiſite therefore that we conſider, Honeſt intention may ſometimes be ſuch only *Confuſedly* and in the General (in which caſe it is much akin to the nature of *Negative Righteouſneſs*) when meerly we propound no Evil to our ſelves: Such ſeems the Honeſt intention of theſe *Two hundred men* in the Text: now this kind is too inform and immature to wear the Character of *Virtuous*, *Praiſe-worthy*, or *truly good*; much leſs will it make our Actions ſuch. Intention truly good muſt be more *diſtinct*, particular and poſitive. And to that purpoſe it is neceſſary,

1. That we be fully ſatisfied of the Right and Lawfulneſs, both of our Cauſe and particular Actions which we go about.

2. That

2. That we engage in them with a deſign to pleaſe God, or to attain ſome conſiderable good, in the getting or enjoying of which good we have no ſuſpicion at all we ſhall diſpleaſe him. If it be otherwiſe with us, *Whatſoever is not of faith*, that is, from a Conſcience fully ſatisfied, touching the goodneſs or lawfulneſs of the means uſed, or ends deſigned; whatſoever, I ſay, is not thus of Faith, *is Sin.*

It will therefore become every man, in matters of moment, not to truſt too much an *Extemporary good intention*, as I may ſo call it; but to examine all, and to be careful, that, as there is no evil in his Intentions, ſo there be due and particular good.

Thirdly, I muſt add, To conſtitute any *Action* juſt or warrantable, is requiſite the Integrity, at leaſt harmleſsneſs of the *Circumſtances*; as of *Perſon*, *Place*, *Time*, *Manner*, and the like: For, not only may that be *lawful* to *one* man, but alſo in great ſtrictneſs his *Duty*, which in *another* would be groſs *Sin*. To take an inſtance familiar at ſuch ſeaſons as this; namely the Executing, nay even the impleading and arraigning Malefactors. To give evidence againſt them, to accuſe and charge them, is the *Duty* of Witneſſes and of particular Officers: but in other Perſons, that is in the generality of the People preſent, who know nothing or little of their caſes, or are not by their place called to intermeddle, it would be *ſin* and an Exceeding their Calling; at beſt, all would judge it abominable impertinence. Again, To execute them when condemned, at leaſt to ſee they be executed, is the duty of *Sheriffs* and ſuch Legal Officers: but if a Private perſon, or other by Law not authorized, ſhould preſently, upon their having

having received Sentence, kill them in the place he could next come at them, I know not how he could acquit himself of *Blood-guiltiness*. And then, even those very Officers to whom it belongs, are bound, not only by Law, but Conscience, to observe, as near as may be done, *Manner*, *Place*, *Time*, and like Circumstances: Otherwise the very Execution of what they think *Justice*, may prove *unjust*.

But more particularly to our present Business. As to the *Manner* of Doing such things which in themselves are Good or Lawful, there are two considerable Points, which the frequency perhaps of Good mens miscarriages makes necessary to be pressed.

1. That all *Duties* be performed *without Ostentation* and vain glory. Though the Matter of fact be most Obligatory, or of the Divinest and most Excellent nature in the World; yet if the Affectation of Applause, or of the popular Eye and Vogue, interpose in its performance, it unhallows the Action, and deprives us of the Reward. This our Lord teacheth as to *Alms* and *Liberality*; *Matth.* VI. 2. As to *Prayer* and *Devotion*, *ver.* 5. As to *Fasting* and *Humiliation*, *ver.* 16. And by parity of reason, 'tis true of any other (otherwise) good works.

2. That *Liberties* (or things free) be ever used *without scandal*. By *Scandal* I mean, (with the Scripture generally) *the Drawing or Encouraging others to do what they are not in Conscience convinced they may do*: Which notion we shall do well to take notice of, as well for the satisfying and confirming our Consciences against unreasonable scruples and fears, as for the guiding our Practice. For this be-

ing admitted to be the nature of Scandal, it is not then every one, which is capable of *administring matter of Scandal* by the use of his Liberty; but only such Personages, by whose examples others are apt to frame their lives. Nor again is it every one that is apt to be *scandalized*, or *receive scandal*, but only the *Weak*; People who understand not duly the rule of life, or are not able to distinguish betwixt *Duty*, *Liberty*, and *Sin*. But if it so come to pass, that any of us, being persons of reputed prudence and piety, and so of authority and considerable remark in the world, use such freedom in words or deeds before unskilful Judges of things, that they clearly are drawn in, or likely to be drawn in, to do what they doubt lawful, or believe unlawful, be the matter of fact on our sides never so just or innocent, and our hearts never so sincere therein, yet we, by becoming thus a stumbling-block to others, are not only sinners against them, but also against their Lord and ours, Christ himself. For, 1 *Cor.* VIII. 12. *When ye sin against the Brethren, and wound their weak Conscience, ye sin against Christ.*

Upon the whole then, that any Action be good and warrantable, we see it is necessary, That the *Matter* be *Right or Lawful*, That our *Intention* be truly *Honest* (and both these points to us distinctly known to be so) That, lastly, in our management, such *Integrity* or Harmlesness of *Circumstances* do concur, as that by, or in none of them we violate any Law of God: And particularly, *Duties* must be performed *without Ostentation*, *Liberties* used *without Scandal*.

And

And now to ſum up our Evidence: If good Intention change not the Nature of things, but Impiety be impiety ſtill, injuſtice, Injuſtice ſtill, and ſo as to all Acts of Uncharitableneſs, Intemperance, Impurity, and whatſoever is of like nature, none of them all are ſanctified by a good intent (however real, not pretended); If to conſtitute any Cauſe or Action there be diverſe other Material points requiſite, beſides the ſincerity of our Intentions, any one of which points failing, the Cauſe or Action good, according to the nature of the failure, partakes of true and proper guilt (and all theſe things are abundantly proved) then is it evident that no mans good intention will warrant or juſtifie either his engaging or proceeding in a bad cauſe. Nay, if we will be juſt to our own Senſe and Reaſon, it is further, *ex abundanti*, and beyond what we in the beginning propounded, concluſible from what has been evinced, That good Intentions will not warrant mens ingaging and proceeding even in a good Cauſe it ſelf under any undue Circumſtances.

It remains now, that I bring all home to bear upon the deſign I laid down in the beginning, and that I preſs upon all ſorts practice ſuitable to the Truths I have aſſerted. I ſhall only have time for a double *Exhortation*.

1. And the firſt of them ſhall be, *That we* all of us again and again *conſider every Cauſe* which tempts our eſpouſal, *before we engage* our ſelves; or, if already, without due conſideration, engaged, *before we further proceed* therein. It is not enough that our Intentions in the General be good: We have heard, they may be generally good, when they want maturity of præ-

vious thought and consideration to make them distinctly such. Besides there are other points, of great moment, to be looked after: I will not be troublesome in recapitulations, I will only put the Case in short to all our Consciences. We are haply most of us zealous in our ways, and for our own Party. But have we, to full resolution and satisfaction of Conscience, weighed the present state and *interest of the Common Christianity*? Have we stated the *Causes*, upon which we mutually *Separate*? Are they such which we judge in good earnest will bear us out? And then, do we withdraw from one another no farther, nor affect or maintain any greater distance, than these Causes will warrant? Finally, in the whole have we no by and sinister ends, no design but sincerely of Conscience, and such which we dare carry to, and own before God's Tribunal? Happy were it for the Christian World, would our Divisions endure this Test, or had Christian men (generally) considered, or would yet consider these things as they ought. But alas! even in Religion it self, the far greatest part *walk at* a meer *peradventure*: At least, they are carried along with that Current into which their Interest, Condition, or *Genius* happens to cast them. And being once engaged (*Vestigia nulla retrorsum*) almost as few return from their respective Zealotry, as from the Grave. They rather *rush on like the Horse into the Battle*; and the Similitude holds also, farther than it were to be wisht, they are rid too often, even to their own destruction. My Brethren, if we have any of us been unhappy in rash and inconsiderate Divisions, or in addicting our selves to any so divided Parties, yet let us not perpetuate, and, as far as in us lies, eternise our own and the Churches miseries.

miſeries. If either our Reaſon, or our Chriſtianity, or our own or the Common ſafety be ſignificant to us, *Let us gird up the loins of our mind, and be ſober*: Let us recollect and ſummon together our conſiderative powers, and endeavour to judge like Men and Chriſtians, Where we are, and how we ſtand. And if upon the whole, all be clear, and Conſcience fully ſatisfied, yet let us remember, we *owe* ſomewhat *to the World*; and the leaſt, that can be, will be, by all honeſt means to endeavour *its quiet*. And verily he is unworthy of his own quiet, at leaſt will not long enjoy it, who is not content a little to deny himſelf of his own fancies, for others and the Publick ſatisfaction.

To bring this Exhortation a little nearer to our preſent Circumſtances and Condition. Let us remember, we here are not *Law-givers*, nor are therefore to conſider what is *our own will and pleaſure*, what *we* would have *Enacted*, nay, not perhaps what is in our judgment *fit* to be injoyned, but what *actually* is already *injoyned*, and what it is *lawful* for us *to obey*. As to thoſe of us, who have obeyed the Laws, we deſire only thus much charity from Diſſenters (which we will ſurely repay, *good meaſure, preſſed down, ſhaken together, and running over*) we deſire, I ſay, only thus much charity, that we may not all of us be thought to have acted blindfold, or upon corrupt inducements. There is a multitude of us can, in the fear of God, profeſs we have again and again conſidered the Eccleſiaſtical Laws, and according to our duty, as we believe, we have been, and are *obedient*, *not only for wrath*, *but alſo for Conſcience ſake*. *Conſcience* we can ſay, not meerly *our own*, *but others*, of whom we are,

and

and must be tender. And we doubt not but in this our obedience *we please God*, and are not *unserviceable* unto *Men*. We hope further, we are able to approve our selves to the Great Judge of all in the several fore-mentioned Particulars; at least according to that equitable allowance, which our gracious God, through Jesus Christ, gives to humane infirmities, and which the best of us all must crave, even in our best Actions. Now as to *those who withdraw* from us: We call not into question the *sincerity of their intentions*, we neither are, nor desire to be Judges thereof; We profess we generally judge the best, and where we cannot so judge, we suspend our judgment: But we desire them to resume and reiterate the consideration of the *Rectitude of their Cause*: For we must acknowledge and avow, we neither could see, nor have been shewn, any warrant, which makes it *lawful* to any, much less their *duty*, as many pretend, to *separate* from that *Church*, which neither urges nor receives any *Article of Faith*, but what must be confessed pure; which *worships* God by no *Office* more or less than what is of his own institution, and the *forms* thereof *not dissonant* to his word; whose *Government*, if the sense of Christendom in all Ages (till within this hundred and few more years, and of the Generality of it still) interpreting Holy Scriptures, may be heard, is truly *Apostolical*; and in fine, whose *Discipline* (though forced in some things to truckle under the iniquity of times) suffers few or none to be so bad as they would, and encourages all to be as good as they can. If it be lawful to separate from such a Church, where shall we find that, from which we may not separate? And where then will be an end of Divisions? In the Church

of

of *Corinth*, where were ſundry greater Diſorders and Corruptions tolerated, than can be pretended amongſt us (that we know of) the Apoſtle does not tolerate, but ſeverely reprove their Diviſions, and both cenſure the Authors of them, as Perſons *to be avoided*, and the Abettors, as *Carnal*. Then, laſtly, as to the Management of this departure, we paſſionately beſeech, and in the Lord conjure, all, who are guilty of withdrawing, that they will conſider whether the *Circumſtances*, either of making or maintaining it, be *warrantable*, or indeed well excuſable. Particularly, and briefly: Suppoſe things ſtood ſo, that Separation were their *Duty*; yet is *Theirs* without *Oſtentation*, as all Duties ought to be? Do not they publickly value themſelves thereupon, and deſpiſe others? Are not they (in their own Language) The *Saints*, and the reſt of the Nation Thoſe who are *without*, the People of the World, not to take up more odious Names? Again, admit *Separation* from us were *lawful*, yet is *theirs* without *ſcandal*? Without ſcandal to the *weak of their own Church*, without ſcandal to the *weak of Ours*? Without ſcandal to *Papiſts*, or ſcandal even to *Jews*? Without ſcandal to men of *all Religions*, or ſcandal to men of *None*? The good God be merciful unto us, and deliver Chriſtian men from Partiality and Self-flattery. —But I muſt Contract.

2. My Second Exhortation ſhall be, That being ſatisfied in Conſcience touching the Right or Lawfulneſs of our own engaging, in all points of our Cauſe, or, as ſome had rather ſpeak, touching the Excellency and Superlativeneſs of the way we are in, we would not ſpoil a good Cauſe by our ill Management. That the

the Religious amongſt us are Divided at preſent, there is none who ſees not; Nor, that all the Petty Diviſions are reducible to theſe three Grand ones, *Papiſts*, *Regular Proteſtants*, and *Non-Conforming Proteſtants*.

The Cauſe or way of the *Firſt*, I do declare, I judge, no Power on Earth, no nor (with all reverence be it ſpoken) of Heaven it ſelf, can make juſt: For, *God cannot Ly*, that is, contradict himſelf. The Doctrine they teach, profeſs, and (if we will credit them) believe, is againſt expreſs Scripture, the Analogy of Faith, and the Conſent of the Ancient (and true preſent) Catholick Church: And indeed, in divers Points alſo againſt Senſe and Reaſon, the common Principles of Mankind. And too much of their Morals is no better.

The Cauſe or Way of the *Second* is juſt, if any under Heaven. I need not ſpeak my mind again: I do not ſay, there is nothing amongſt us defective; nor that there is nothing which may be amended; nor again, that there is no miſmenagement, or no evil People amongſt us. I do not believe there is, or will be ever, ſuch a Church on Earth: That accuſation, to the end of the world, will juſtly ly againſt the Pureſt Church; *I have a few things againſt thee: Revel.* II. 4. 14, 20. But I muſt avow, I know not that Church, which would take the *Mote out of our Eye*, that has not *a Beam in her own*.

The Cauſe of the *Third* muſt be acknowledg'd by all indifferent and conſiderative men, at leaſt *doubtful*: For he is void of reaſon who ſhall deny, that diſputes with the lighteſt Probabilities are manag'd againſt it; and ſuch which with the moſt rational perſons turn the Scales. Poſſibly, to ſome of them who have eſpouſed

ſpouſed it, it may not ſeem doubtful: But whatever my Charity may induce me to think it in any of them, were I my ſelf a mainteiner of it, I could not judge it in *my ſelf* any thing leſs, than *Formal* as well as *Miterial Schiſm*. But for the preſent we'll not diſpute the Point: Admit it to be *lawful*; I only move, that it be not *miſmanaged*, that Good men would not proſecute a lawful Cauſe in an unlawful manner, or by undue means, and ſo intangle themſelves and Cauſe in Injuſtice and Iniquity.

Having then concluded the Cauſe of the *Regular Proteſtants*, good and excellent; and for the preſent admitted (though not granted) that of the *Nonconformiſts* to be lawful; there is chiefly a double miſmenagement, which I muſt tax at preſent (and that on both ſides, for I would not be partial) and which the Exhortation in hand proceeds againſt.

1. The former of which is, *Overcharging* one another. This, beſides that it renders us guilty of ſin, and makes ſtill our matters worſe, does further expoſe us Both to our Common Enemies, and create to them ſweet Sport, and to our ſelves Scorn and Contempt. The *Nonconformiſts charge* us moſt unjuſtly with *Popery*: Give me leave to beſeech theſe our Accuſers, that they will conſider what they ſay. If we had no Conſcience (which they would be very uncharitable, ſhould they conclude of us) if it were all one to us, in point of Faith, what Religion were eſtabliſht or went up, yet except they will alſo think us mad, and that we have renounced our worldly Intereſts, together with our Conſciences, they cannot think we are any Friends to Popery, or would make

any *Advances* towards it. Can they perſwade themſelves we are ſo ſottiſh, or our Memories ſo ſhort, as that we have forgotten the *Marian days*? Do not we know, that if ever Popery get up again, we of the Miniſtry, and eſpecially thoſe of us who are in the higheſt Order, muſt firſt go to Stake? As to the People, they may ſcape: *Theſe Sheep, what have they done*? But their *hands will* ſurely *be upon the Shepherds*. Or if we ſhould by flight, or any other baſe way, ſave our lives, (which as the world goes, we could ſcarce expect) if we ſhould, as *Job* expreſſes it, come off *with the skin of our Teeth*, yet, is that ſuch a mercy or boon, which any can judge men in our preſent conditions fond of? Are our Families, or Liberties, our Honours, our Preferments nothing to us? (Sometimes theſe men think and ſay, we love the World well enough) Is there any *Vicar*, *Parſon*, or *Biſhop* in the Kingdom, that ſees not, or knows not, of the *Prieſt* of his Pariſh, or the *Titular* of his See in preſent being? Do we not daily behold them walk the Streets, or know their Confinements? Are we ignorant of their *Claims*, or that they look upon us only as *Uſurpers*, and themſelves the true *Proprietours*, and that they now have a long time looked for the bleſſed hour? You cry out of us, I ſay, ſometimes that we are worldly, carnal men, that we only mind the *Fleece*, not the *Flock*: If we do even that, we cannot be Popiſhly affected: There is nothing ſo deſtructive of our worldly intereſt as Popery; That has already left no Benefices or Livings vacant for us, and if it prevails will ſoon not leave us Air to breath. For ſhame then, interpret ſome mens Actions otherwiſe than you do: and if in all humane probability they act againſt their own Secular intereſt, in the things which they

Job XIX. 20.

cannot

cannot but see, and do see as well as you, impute not those actions to Popish affection, but good Conscience. They dare not *do evil that good may come*, or be unjust, for their own preservation. Thus as to one Party.

Now I will not deny but some of our men are quit with these false Accusers, and pay them home in their own Coyn. (God forgive both). Hence so many bitter Invectives instead of Sermons; so much raking into old, forgiven, and it were to be wisht, forgotten Crimes; charging the Villanies of the *Absalons* upon every Individual of those who *went in the simplicity of their heart, and knew not any thing:* Hence, in common Discourse, so many upbraidings of men with those which were the sins of their ignorance, youth and education, rather than of the men; such care to stigmatize some persons with the miscarriages, which they have long ago repented of, and, if occasion should serve, would expiate with their lives; such aggravating some Peoples innocent expressions, and drawing those Conclusions from them, which the poor men abhor, but never intended; with a world of like practices, familiar amongst all Partisans. Certainly, my Brethren, these things are very iniquitous: If my brother has *repented* of a *sin*, God has taken it away from him; and the *meaning* he never had, was never *his:* I may not therefore impute either such *sin*, or such *meaning* to *him*, or upbraid him therewith. We would think they gave us more than our due, who should deal thus with us: Let us therefore our selves unlearn such vile and pitiful Arts. I confess 'tis much another case, where men retain their sins still, and will not, without such remembran-

ces, be brought to acknowledgment or ſenſe of them: But even herein alſo care is to be had, and much prudence uſed: for we may be injurious to our Cauſe by too much expoſing our Adverſary; An unintereſſed ſtander by will call ſuch diſcourſes *Recriminations*, not *Defences*; and will ſay the Caſe needs them, becauſe the Advocate uſes them. And as to the Perſons or Parties concerned; this kind of treatment can only tend to mutual exaſperation, upon which no good, becauſe no divine bleſſing, can be expected. If therefore we will be juſt to our ſelves, or our own beloved Cauſe, let us, on both ſides, forbear immoderate Charges, as being infallibly derogatory to whatſoever there is of true Juſtice either in our Cauſe or Defences thereof.

2. Men may ſpoil a good Cauſe by too much *Stiffneſs* and *Tenaciouſneſs* of their own Senſe, and by this means keeping open ſuch Breaches, which might happily be cloſed. There is ſuch a thing, in *Solomon*'s judgment, as *Being righteous overmuch, and making our ſelves over-wiſe*, (*Eccleſ.* VII. 16.) by which he ſuggeſts there, men may *deſtroy themſelves*. חשומם Become *deſolate*, even to the admiration and amazement of the Beholders; or elſe ſtand ſingle and by themſelves, as the Marks of Common fury. If contending Parties may be ever guilty of this Evil, it is certainly in ſuch caſes wherein the Differences betwixt them being but ſmall, neither will recede the leaſt from their own Sentiments; or (which is with ſuch the ſame (for their own *apprehenſions* are too often herein made the meaſures) from their own *Right*; (as if nothing could be more Righteous than each of their Cauſes, nothing more infallible than each of their Judg-

Judgments). And if ever men may expect such punishment or issue, it is when such Differences are perpetuated upon such mutual heights. Wherefore, *A sectâ infallibili libera Ecclesiam tuam Domine.*

I confess there are some who publish such Principles and Positions of late, as infer *Unity in the Church not* to be *necessary*: These make the breach irreconcileable, and therefore are not to be heard. There's an *Argument* now for *Unity* amongst us in this Kingdom (I speak to those who call themselves *Protestants*) which must be heard, and is uncontrolable: We must *unite, or be destroy'd.* At all times *Christian duty* obliges us thereto, now *Necessity* and *Self-preservation.* Two or more parties may ballance One, when any single Other cannot. I speak plain enough. Now if we must Unite, the only question will be, Upon *what terms*? Must we of the establisht Church come over to you who Dissent, or You come over unto us? We declare we cannot, without Schism: but are ready to sacrifice all we can otherwise to the Publick Peace and Safety. And this Pretence is real: You, who dissent, are very far from being all of a piece: Besides those Elder and less Anomalous Factions of *Presbyterians* and *Independents*, there are *Antinomians*, *Millenaries*, *Anabaptists*, *Quakers*, and Sects which know not what they are, nor we what to call. All the world must allow there are Schisms and much worse, as far as worse can be, amongst such an Heterogeneous Body as this. Should we yield to any one of these, we were yet as far from gaining the rest, as we are now from uniting all.

Take those two, which I called the *Elder Parties* of

of the Diſſenters, How impoſſible a thing is it for them to agree what will ſatisfie them! They had a numerous *Aſſembly* gathered together of themſelves moſtly, which ſate many years. Did they agree then upon any common terms of Union betwixt themſelves? Or are they agreed ſince? Let any produce the *Accommodation* if they can: and if not, let it be confeſt that there is Schiſm amongſt even theſe.

Again, take either of the Parties ſingle: Let them ſhew us, what Chriſtian Church upon the face of the Earth owns them, as they are broken off from the Eſtabliſht Church of *England* (and as indeed they broke down its Order, Form of Worſhip, Diſcipline and whole Frame, to their Power) Let them ſhew us, I ſay, *what Proteſtant Church owns them*, as ſuch, for a Church, or (as ſuch) holds Communion with them. If one of the Parties ſhould anſwer, The *Kirk of Scotland*; the Reply is obvious: The Eſtabliſht Church of *Scotland* was the ſame, in effect, with that of *England*, and fell by the ſame hands: And as to what the Anſwerers mean by the *Kirk*, 'twas only a Member of the *Pars rea*, a very guilty part of themſelves, or of the accuſed Body. It is well known, there is extant an *Harmony* of the *Confeſſions* of all the Reformed Churches throughout *Europe*, to ſhew the World their Chriſtian Agreement and Communion. In that *Collection* are extant with univerſal Approbation, *two Confeſſions of the Church of* England, as by Law it then ſtood, and, bleſſed be God, now ſtands eſtabliſht: two, I ſay, becauſe different in Form, but of the ſame Subſtance, and very near of the ſame date. We can ſome of us remember the time, when the forementioned *Aſſembly* compiled alſo a *Confeſſion*

of

of Faith, and a good *Latiniſt* excellently tranſlated it, and in that form it was ſent abroad with a deſire and deſign to have it inſerted in the then new Edition of the *Harmony of Confeſſions*. But the Foreign Churches ſtood conſtant to the Two old ones, and rejected the new. Judge hence what Church of *England* they own, and whether they hold Communion with that People as a Church, whoſe Confeſſion they would not admit. They well ſaw the Admiſſion of it had deſtroyed the *Harmony*, that is, as well rendred the Collection contradictious in it ſelf, as brought too juſt an imputation of Schiſm upon the Reformation.

Further, in a word, What ſecurity can there be from partaking in *Schiſm*, and indeed, as it may happen, *Hereſie* too, in the Communion of that Church, the Form and Order of whoſe Worſhip and Adminiſtration of Sacraments is not certainly known, nay, according to their very Conſtitution, is no where twice the ſame; all being left to the gifts and diſcretion of the Miniſter, who is declared unfit for his Office if he need (and conſequently will uſe) a conſtant Form? What man can ſay, with any other than an Implicite Faith, and therefore what Church will ever declare, that they hold Communion, or agree in Worſhip, with ſuch a People? Herein this Generation of men has departed even from all the Foreign Presbyterian Churches themſelves, who all have their certain Orders and Forms of Publick Worſhip.

It were tedious to purſue more Particulars; give me leave to ſum up what has bee ſaid on this Head. Can it be expected (and much leſs demanded) by men of reaſon, that we ſhould relinquiſh and renounce a Conſtitution,

ſtitution, which has made us famous amongſt Foreign Reformed Churches, and has paſt their Approbation from the beginning, to unite with men who are at a greater diſtance from one another (if you reſpect *at leaſt the* ſeveral Sects) than perhaps we are from them all; the very ſobereſt Party of all whom (as they would be thought) if we would go about to agree to, we ſhall not find (as far as I can ſee) one Proteſtant Church would recommend them to our Fellowſhip by having firſt owned them as a Church, or having held Communion with them; nay, we are not ſure, that we can in Conſcience hold Communion with them; that is, joyn in, and conſent to, their Worſhip one hour our ſelves? Can this, I ſay, be expected or demanded from us? It cannot ſurely. Some *Circumſtantials* may be on our hand *abated* or *relaxed* (and had been doubtleſs long ago, if Men of eager and inflexible Spirits had not hindred): but the main Conſtitution we may not recede from. What moſt of the Diſſenters would be at (No Liturgy, no Epiſcopacy, no Uniformity, *&c.*) may not be, cannot be, without Schiſm.

Wherefore again to take up my Exhortation: Let us reſolve upon yielding ſpirits; Let us move towards one another, in order to meeting. We of the Eſtabliſht Church do not ſay there is nothing amongſt us, which may be amended. Again, we do not ſay there is nothing among you which is to be approved. My Exhortation to you here only is, That as far as your Cauſe has any thing good in it, you would not blaſt that good, and the hopes of its taking, by an Univerſal ſtiffneſs; and while you inſiſt on things, which are queſtionable, and (in the judgment of moſt others but

but your ſelves) not fit to be granted, keep open the breach to our Common Deſtruction.

The only ſteps, by which we can mutually move to Peace, I, with all ſubmiſſion, conceive to be theſe.

1. That we would all ſeriouſly, betwixt God and our own Conſciences, ſeverally, ſtudy Self-denial, (one of the great Leſſons our Lord taught us) and that with a peculiar eye and regard to Accommodation. One man perhaps muſt deny himſelf of a certain kind of Popularity and Vulgar eſteem: Another, of an Idioſyncraſy, or particular humour, though perhaps that not ſo much natural as contracted: A third of ſomewhat elſe. All, of whatſoever good Conſcience tells us is leſs valuable than Common Union. 2. That the ſobereſt of the Diſſenters would Categorically and ſincerely publiſh, what of the Eſtabliſht Order they can agree to. 3. That they would actually do, and teach their Followers to do, what they in Conſcience judge lawful. If theſe Points might be obtained, certainly in a very ſhort time a Conſultation of things would be reſumed: And then, let thoſe be blamed, who would not hear and do Reaſon.

But if theſe, and ſuch Diſcourſes as theſe, may not be heard, if we of the Church muſt only be Calumniated ſtill, as the great Enemies to a Publick Peace, and no means will take for the ſweetning and allaying the heights of thoſe Spirits we have to deal with, we can all of us only expect the fruit of Contention, and that is, *Confuſion, and every Evil Work*; one part of which will be, as already intimated, our Common Ruin. And let it be conſidered beforehand, when we ſhall have again ruin'd our ſelves by our own James III. 16.

hands, how poor a mitigation of mutual misery it will be, to excuse our selves with our *Ignorance and Good meaning:* Of which, when God comes to judge, the former perhaps will be found Stubbornes, Heedlesnes or Pride; and the later, not what its name imports, but somewhat, which we mistook for it, called in true and proper speaking, *Self-flattery*, or too good a conceipt of our own Deceitful hearts, and ways.

To prevent then this misery, if it be the will of God, Let us all *Search and Try* our *Ways* and *Hearts*, and be content to see our selves genuinly what we are, and to judge of our ways according to Truth and Soberness. And because our own Scrutinies may be partial, Let that Appeal and Prayer of *Davids* dwell in all our hearts and lips. *Psalm* CXXXIX. 23, 24. *Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.* Let us inculcate such Petitions as these, and beat them into our hearts at the Throne of Grace, till, being brought under the Power of them, we become content to be led into the ways of Charity, Peace and Righteousness, yea, though they should be found far different from those which we have traverst before with the greatest Affection and Delight.

The good God pour into all our hearts such Christian Sincerity and Honest Temper (the true Fruit of the Holy Spirit) through his Son Jesus Christ; To whom, &c.

THE

THE CRY OF HOLINESS FOR PEACE.

A SERMON on Sunday, in time of the Assises there.

By the same Author.

LONDON,
Printed in the Year, 1682.

The Text.

HEBR. XII. 14.

Follow Peace with all Men, and Holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.

IT were eaſie from ſo pregnant a Paſſage of Holy Scripture, as this read, to ſuggeſt great variety of particular Subjects, each of which would adminiſter matter for much a larger Diſcourſe than I may be allowed at preſent.

The Holy Spirit in laying out our Chriſtian Duties conſiders us, either as ſingle perſons; and ſo the ſum of all that concerns us is *Holineſs:* Or elſe as Members of ſome Society, more or leſs Publick; and ſo our main Duty is *Peace.*

Of both theſe the moſt zealous Endeavours and Practice we ſee ſtrictly injoyned in the Text. *Follow Peace*, that is, Purſue it with all urgency, yea, though it fly from you: And this in the greateſt extent, *With all men.* Then as to *Holineſs*, this is not only injoyned with equal Emphaſis, but the purſuit thereof in-

inforced with the moſt moving Conſideration; *without which* (ὃ χωὶς immediately relates to ἁγιασμὸν) that is, *without Holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* That (at preſent) incomprehenſible fruition of the Supream and Infinite Good, which ſhall at once tranſport and ſatisfie all the powers of the Humane Soul, ſhall be vouchſaf'd to none but the Holy man.

I will not hold you in ſuſpenſe, but immediately fix on theſe *two*, as conſidered *injoyn'd in conjunction.* And whereas ſuch joint injunction of them may be conceived to have different reſpects, I ſhall not at preſent conſider much their Connexion, as the Later may be thought the Condition or Qualification of our purſuit of the former, thus; *Follow Peace with all men and Holineſs*; that is, *ſo far ſeek* and maintain *peace with all*, as *Holineſs* will *permit* (a ſenſe not to be neglected): But as the Former is a means to, or a *Cauſa ſine qua non* of the Later, thus; *Follow peace and holineſs*; that is, Follow Peace as it is a means unto Holineſs, and without which Holineſs will be very imperfectly, if at all attained.

A little more diſtinctly yet. *Peace* according to the different Society, to which it relates, may be either Civil or Eccleſiaſtical. The ſtudy and purſuit of both is undoubtedly our duty, deſignedly comprehended in the Text, and conducive to Holineſs; and the injoyment of both to be reckoned as one of the greateſt Bleſſings. The one of them, Peace in the State (bleſſed be God and the Conduct of our gracious Soveraign) we have had much of, and ſtill have, notwithſtanding all our Fears and Murmurings; which God cure and forgive: The other, Peace in the Church, we neither have had, now a long time, no not ſince our Soveraigns bleſſed Reſtauration, nor have at preſent ſo much of

as we might, were we not on all ſides much wanting to our ſelves. And this is that, which I deſign now to preſs; and to preſs under this conſideration, as it connects with Holineſs in the preſent injunction of both, as it tends unto Holineſs, and as certainly we ſhould have much more of Holineſs, than is now publickly to be ſeen amongſt us, had we more of Peace and Holineſs in the Church.

My Brethren, there are many amongſt us pretend a great deal of Zeal for Holineſs; nothing is more frequent in their mouths, and I wiſh there lay nothing cloſer to all our hearts, than Reformation and the need of it. I cenſure none, but only ſhall at preſent endeavour to demonſtrate, that the moſt likely and proper way to a Publick Reformation is Eccleſiaſtical Peace and Union, and that thoſe who with all their might purſue not this, are, ſo far forth as they are negligent of it, or averſe to it, real Enemies to Reformation and true Holineſs, whatever their pretences otherwiſe may be.

By *Peace in general* we mean ſuch a Conjunction of mens Minds and Manners, that one man is not in any thing deſignedly troubleſome to another, but rather favours every others advantages. And this being applyed *particularly* to Cauſes and Matters Eccleſiaſtical, will amount to no leſs, than ſuch an Union of Judgment and Affections as engages Chriſtian people to maintain Fellowſhip and Communion in all Offices of Divine Worſhip, and Matters pertaining to the Glory of God. In whatever Church this is wanting, in that proportionably is wanting Peace.

By *Holineſs* we underſtand an Habitual Separation (or being ſeparate) from all Vice and Vitious Practices, and a like Devotedneſs of Heart and Life

to

to God, according to the Rule of the Goſpel.

Now I ſay, the firſt much conduces to the ſecond; Publick Peace in the Church to real Holineſs, and whatever practices are at preſent contrary to Peace amongſt us, are proportionably deſtructive of Holineſs.

The main Evidence I ſhall give ſhall be to ſet forth the pernicious Effects of Faction; and let none ſuſpect I will in the leaſt be bitter, or invective, herein: I promiſe to ſpeak the *words of meekneſs and ſoberneſs*, as well as *of truth*. I ſhall then preſent to your conſideration the Effects of Faction or Church-diviſion: Firſt, upon the State. Secondly, upon the Church. And Thirdly, upon the ſpirits of Private men. And if all theſe are found moſt fatal to Holineſs, I ſhall hope it will be concluded there is no following Holineſs without Purſuing Peace.

1. I begin with the ſad effects of Church-diviſion upon the States and Kingdoms, within which ſuch divided Churches lye: And theſe are generally no better (worſe they cannot well be) than Civil Wars, and all the ſad Conſquences thereof; which are nothing but the moſt horrid Complications of all Impieties imaginable; or, in the Language of St. *James*, (*Chap.* III. 16.) *Confuſion and Every evil work*. That Civil Wars are the Common Effects of Diviſions and Factions in the Church, eſpecially where ſuch Diviſions are continued, and have had age, or time enough to ferment, as I may ſo ſpeak, the yet too freſh bleeding wounds of theſe three Nations ſpeak more plainly than perhaps we would all be willing to hear. The point is tender, and therefore I forbear further to touch it. That Profaneneſs, Irreligion and Vices of all

all ſorts are the general effects of Wars, both while they rage, and too long after ſome compoſure of things, the Experience of all Ages and People witneſſeth, as well as our own. There are thoſe perhaps that will tell us, It cannot be otherwiſe; 'Tis impoſſible it ſhould not be ſo: Neceſſity compels, not only Private Perſons, but Publick Bodies, to foul Practices. When there was a General *after Gods own heart*, *Every one that was in debt*, (and had no mind to be juſt) *Every one that was diſcontent*, (the fruit commonly of mens own Vices and Debaucheries, at leaſt of their Imprudence, Pride or Refractorineſs) *and Every one that was in diſtreſs, gathered themſelves unto him, and he became Captain over them*, 1 Sam. XXII. 2. And 'tis ſure enough, by the ſequel of the Hiſtory, there were worſe than ſuch in the greateſt Commands of his Army. *The Sons of* Zerviah *were too hard for* the good King, they were *Evil-doers*, privy murtherers, implacable, they ſhed the bloud of *war in peace*; yet durſt not he then animadvert upon them; 2 *Sam.* III. 39. and, 1 *Kings* II. 5. *&c.* Now to ſet up a Refuge for ſuch men as theſe in any Nation, as Wars do, what ſad influence muſt it have upon the Manners of the Nation?

To ſpeak ſomething cloſer to our own Country, and the late unhappy, ever to be lamented Troubles; and that in the Language of thoſe who will not be thought Railers, or *Falſe Accuſers of the Brethren*: The Aſſembly in their Petition to the Parliament, *Jul.* 19. 1644. have, amongſt others, this Prayer; *That ſome ſevere courſe might be taken againſt Fornication, Adultery, and Inceſt, which* (as they complain, to uſe their own terms) *do* (that is, then did) *greatly abound; eſpecially of late, by reaſon of Impunity.* (It

seems then, those Odious things, the Bishops Courts, while standing, do some good: Fornication, Adultery, and Incest do not ordinarily pass with Impunity under them; which they soon obtain'd, when this Check was taken off.) And not only in this single kind, but in most other Exorbitancies, was the Case no better. Particularly, at present; Atheism and Prophaneness are justly complained of to be reigning Sins, as well as Carnality: Now, I say it, and will at any time prove it, Hell it self can scarce devise, indite, or vent grosser Prophaneness, Leudness, and Blasphemy, than may be shewn justified, defended and cryed up, under the Notion of Perfection, in diverse printed Pamphlets betwixt the years 49 and 56. Nay, in the very year 1660, the greatest part of the *London Ministers* published *A Seasonable Exhortation*, as they call it, complaining of the great Wickedness broken loose amongst us, wherein they set forth, as one dreadful Instance, That *some, as they are credibly informed, are grown to that heighth of wickedeness, as to worship the Devil himself.* Pag. 10.

In a word, I could say much more, which would prove that then Impiety broke in like a Torrent upon us, when the Wars broke out. But I conceive all sober men, of what perswasion soever, had rather confess this sad Truth, and lament it too, than hear it more largely proved. Wherefore I say, it follows hence, as from one general head of proof, that they are Enemies to Holiness, who perpetuate at present our Church-divisions, or (which is much the same) who do not their utmost towards a Publick Union.

2. Let us in the next place consider the Effect of Schisms and Factions upon the Church, and the Constitution

ſtitution of things therein; and that Conſideration will conclude the ſame.

It cannot be conceived, at leaſt expected, I ſhould reckon up, or indeed that one man's head ſhould comprehend all the general Inſtances or Kinds of Miſchiefs under this Head: It ſhall therefore ſuffice, that I preſent ſuch, which I judge moſt obnoxious amongſt our ſelves.

Firſt then I ſay, Although Diviſions and Schiſms ſhould not, through the reſtraining hand of God, prove ſo direful to the Kingdom, yet are they infallibly a Plague unto the Church, and by being deſtructive unto its Diſcipline, make havock of Holineſs and publick Good manners. Diſcipline is the great expedient Chriſt has left his Church, both for the keeping out, and *Purging out*, all the *Old Leaven of Naughtineſs and Wickedneſs*, 1 *Cor.* V. 7, 8. *&c.* Whatſoever therefore bereaves the Church of this, lets in a floud of ungodlineſs upon her. And is it not evident to any that has but half an eye, that Diviſions at preſent both take off the Efficacy, and hinder the Exerciſe of Diſcipline amongſt us? I know there are ſome who cry out, We have no ſuch thing as Diſcipline in our Church; we have only a Shadow and Skeleton of it. There is at preſent, it muſt be confeſt, ſomething of truth in the Accuſation. We have indeed too little of the Primitive and Apoſtolical Diſcipline: But we appeal to God and Men where the fault lies.

1. We complain our preſent Diviſions take off the Edge of our Spiritual Weapons. There are ſome, and thoſe Leading men too in their party, that deny any ſuch thing as a National Church, and much more

any Catholick Church in the ſenſe that Article of our Creed has ever been believed by all Chriſtians from the beginning. What ſhould men, acted by ſuch Principles, care for our Excommunicating them upon any Scandals they ſhould be found guilty of? They own no ſuch Church as we are, and as all Chriſtian Ages have ever believed. Again, there are others, who have renounced their Baptiſm for another thing they call ſo; Others that laugh at all Baptiſm, as well as Sacraments, in general: Suppoſe any of theſe ſorts become obnoxious to Church-cenſures for their Immoralities, as too often they do; we cenſure them, and tell our Chriſtian people they ought to look upon them as *Heathens and Publicans.* What now ſignifies this? They have before caſt off the Badge of their Chriſtianity, and ſcorn it, and us for eſteeming it. They are already as Common, and as far without the Pale, as we can ſet them. I have no pleaſure to urge theſe things further.

2. We ſay moreover, beſides this, that the Diviſions take off for the main, the Efficacy of ſuch Diſcipline as we have; they have alſo hindred all along, as well the ſetting up, as the Exerciſe of that Primitive Diſcipline, which our Church long ago deſired, and intended. Thus we read in the Preface of the Office called a Commination. *Brethren, in the Primitive Church there was a Godly Diſcipline, that at the beginning of Lent, ſuch perſons as were notorious Sinners, were put to open Penance, and puniſht in this World, that their Souls might be ſaved in the Day of the Lord; and that others, admoniſhed by their example, might be afraid to offend. Inſtead whereof, until the ſaid Diſcipline may be reſtored again, which thing*

thing is much to be wiſhed, it is thought fit, &c. And our Complaint is juſt, not only in the point there inſtanced, but in divers others. And this is evident: for, not to ſpeak of the enforced prudential connivances or omiſſions of Diſcipline in ſome particular inſtances, and at ſome times, in the Regular Church, even the very ſeparated Congregations themſelves (thoſe of them at leaſt that have any thing of Form or Government amongſt them, and are not purely Anarchical) too often feel the pinches of that Neceſſity and Evil we complain of. There are ſo many pretended Churches for the Ejected to flee to, that proceed againſt them, and you looſe them for ever. You looſe them, I ſay, not ſo much from your own Party, as from the profeſſion and practice of all that looks like Sobriety. They run into irregular Paſſions, and out of meer oppoſition to thoſe who have cenſured them, addict themſelves to ſuch Societies, which are famous for the moſt contrary extremes to their former Profeſſion. Thus many times, God knows, what was deſigned, by Chriſt in the Inſtitution, and by the Church in the Exerciſe, for a remedy, proves to ſuch diſtempered Souls a deadly Poiſon, or in the words of the Apoſtle, *a Stone of ſtumbling, and Rock of offence.* In ſtead of bringing the Delinquents to repentance for one ſin, you drive them into a courſe and ſtate of many more. This, the firſt Effect then of Diviſions upon the Church, that they ruin Diſcipline, and have introduced all the want and impotency of it under which the Church of God at preſent labours, ſhews ſufficiently that they who are Friends to Faction, are none to Holineſs.

Se-

Secondly, Another miſchievous effect of Diviſions upon the Church, is, the drawing off and diverting the Labours of the Miniſtry, from preſſing and propagating Holineſs, to the maintaining Opinions, Controverſies, uſeleſs or troubleſome Speculations, and in a word, the croſs Intereſts of Parties. A ſad thing it is, that in a manner the very Fountains of Salvation, at leaſt the Streams, which flow thence, and which the thirſty Multitude flock to for refreſhment, ſhould be invenom'd, or elſe turn'd aſide out of their due Courſe: but it is a Truth, of which every day gives us freſh and lamentable experience. I do not deny, but there are faults in this regard on both ſides, and as long as ſome men hold on their Humours, and other men are men, 'tis ſcarce poſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe. Holineſs indeed is, on all hands, conſeſt the great buſineſs of Mankind in this World; and ſo the great Errand and Univerſal Text of all Preachers: But how many of thoſe, who pretend the moſt for Holineſs, in their popular Sermons, at leaſt in thoſe Diſcourſes which they now-a-days publiſh (and we can judge only of the reſt we ſee not, by thoſe we have to view) how many, I ſay, of theſe, generally ſpend their pains in inveighing againſt ſome irregularities or hardſhips they apprehend in the Laws, in magnifying (perhaps beyond truth) their Parties ſufferings, in heightning or gratifying their Followers diſlikes of the Eſtabliſht Worſhip, and ſo exaſperating them againſt the greater part of the Nation, as well People, Miniſtry as Magiſtracy? The late Writings of theſe men would tempt one to a ſeverer Character of their preaching, which I forbear: and only add, that then there are few on our ſide, that can perſwade themſelves they ought not to open their Mouths in their own Defence.

Hence

Hence too often, when we ought to be approving our ſelves to every mans Conſcience in the ſight of God, by bringing them to the ſenſe of thoſe ſins, in which they live and wallow ſecurely, and convincing them of the indiſpenſable Neceſſity of a new life, ſhewing and teaching them the way and means thereto, and ſo to Pardon and Heaven, we ſpend good hours, or too great a part of them, in inveighing againſt Perſons or Parties, not one of which hears us; in reflecting on old Crimes and Villanies in which perhaps few men now living are concern'd; or elſe in the bandying ſome Controverſie at preſent in repute, touching which poſſibly there are more Arguments or Difficulties on both ſides, than our ſelves, or all the men in the World can anſwer. By this means Chriſt is not preached, but Contention.

Heu! quantum potuit terræ pelagique parari, &c.

How many Souls might have been won over to Peace and Holineſs, and ſo to God, by thoſe thouſands of Sermons, which having been ſpent only in peeviſh heats, and fanning the flames of Diſcord, have only raiſed the Fire, now almoſt beyond hopes of being quenched in this Generation! Now the Miniſtry of the Word being the great proviſion made by God to *open mens eyes, and to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*, if this be otherwiſe imployed, if this the ſovereign means of Sanctification be perverted or diverted, what Dammage muſt Holineſs needs ſuſtain?

But I muſt not lay all the fault, in this reſpect, upon the Miniſtry alone; the People have their ſhare in

in the guilt. That, which the Apoſtle meant by *ſound Doctrine*, *wholſome Words*, and the like Expreſſions, namely the teaching and preſſing plain and neceſſary Chriſtian Duties, or Sacred Morals, many of our people now nauſeate, and deſert and vilify thoſe, who moſt inſiſt on; having *itching ears*, and too often freakiſh heads and proud hearts. Thoſe who live in abominable Uncharitableneſs, Hypocriſy, contempt of their Chriſtian Brethren (and of their Chriſtian Governours too) nay in groſs Uncleanneſs, Lewdneſs, and Riot, ſhall puff at an honeſt Practical Diſcourſe, and go away diſdainfully with an, *I knew as much as this before.* By this means many worthy Miniſters being diſcouraged from what they would treat of, think it but a prudential Expedient for the keeping their Congregations together, to comply with their Palates, and entertain them with ſuch Subjects, which the Preachers own inclination or natural choice would not have fixed on. But how much, Holineſs ſuffers by all this, how few are *caught by this guile*, and on the contrary, how many are only hardned in their former Vices, and neſtled up in their loſty conceits of their own Judgments, the ſober World too plainly ſee and (perhaps fruitleſly) lament. The good God, who only can, remedy this evil!

That this was St. Paul's Notion, in the m[illegible] by what he calls *ſound Doctrine*, or *ſound Speech*, [ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία, & ὑγιὴς λόγος] See 1 Tim. I. 10. & Chap. VI. 1, 2, 3. & Tit. II. 2, 8. &c. 2 Tim IV. 2, 3.

Laſtly, I muſt not conceal a third Miſchief which our Diviſions bring on the Church, and that is a ſad number of inſufficient Pretenders and Intruders to the Miniſtry. Amongſt too many of the Factious, whoever can but boldly pretend to Gifts (and we know what pittiful reproaches of the Spirit of God ſome men

men are uſed to call ſo) falls on exerciſing; and if after ſome practice, he gain a few ignorant Admirers, theſe ſhall be his Followers (otherwiſe perhaps ſtyled his Converts) and he may ſet up (eſpecially, if ſuch his Adherents chooſe him for their Paſtour) he may ſet up, I ſay, by the very Principles of divers of them, without any other Ordination, for a Miniſter of the Goſpel. This is up and down the Country a great Evil. But I am very far from ſaying, all the Miniſters amongſt the Diſſenters are ſuch: There are divers of them of Learning and good Conſcience, and poſſibly ſome of Legitimate Ordination. However, even theſe, in the Point in hand, we fear will find themſelves to have acted prejudicially to the Intereſt of Holineſs: not only by conniving at, and joyning with ſuch inſufficient Intruders into this Holy Office, but alſo in not doing what they profeſs they can, and what would have ſufficed them, and by this means in leaving their places to be filled ſometimes with men much leſs ſerviceable to the Intereſt of Holineſs than themſelves, who unhappily occaſion many weak peoples following ſuch Intruders, and whoſe Admiſſion, as the Laws and Conſtitution of things ſtand, the Governours of the Church cannot now hinder. God be bleſſed there are few, that I know, or no Inſtances of this caſe hereabouts, but too many elſewhere in our *Iſrael*: Whoſe is the fault, God will judge.

To conclude this Point; Corruptions in Religion, whether in Doctrine or Manners, can never prevail much without corruption of the Holy Order. *Jeroboam* could not effect the Alienation of the people from the Temple and true Worſhip of God, meerly by his ſetting up his Golden Calves at *Bethel*, till he

had made of the *Vileſt* ſort of people *Prieſts, which were not of the ſons of* Levi, perſons no wiſe qualified for their Office of Prieſthood by Education or Exerciſe; 1 *Kings* XII. 31. & XIII. 33. Let thoſe, who have been guilty of doing, occaſioning, or contributing to, the like evil, look to it, and lay it home to their hearts and Conſciences. The generality of ſuch inſufficients is a conſequent of our Diviſions, and hereby Holineſs has ſuffered, and will ſuffer till ſuch practice can be remedied; which will never be effected till Union and Regularity may take place and operate. Thus as to the Effects of Diviſions upon the Church, deſtructive to Holineſs.

3. The third Head propoſed now only remains, *viz.* the Conſideration of the Effects of Faction prejudicial to Holineſs on the ſpirits of private Chriſtians; and theſe, I ſay, it ſtrangely vitiates.

I have already ſtated what I conceive genuinly meant by Holineſs: and according to the Account given in it ſignifies, in a word, an Habitual Complexion of all Chriſtian Graces and Virtues. Now let us look through the whole three Families or Tribes of Chriſtian Duties, towards *God, Men, and Our ſelves*, and ſee how miſerably peoples practice is corrupted under each Head by our Diviſions.

I. I begin with Godlineſs: but muſt admoniſh here, as before, none may expect I ſhould touch on all particulars; Time would fail: Some enumeration of Points more obnoxious may ſuffice.

1. The greateſt corruption or adulteration of Religion and Godlineſs in the world is, the miſplacing it: I mean, mens taking up and holding to ſomewhat in ſtead

ſtead of it, which perhaps in their, and ſome others judgment, has ſome appearance and likeneſs of it, or remote pretence to it, but is very far from being it. And if men ſhall not only do this themſelves, but teach others ſo to do, and vent this falſe Godlineſs, they are more dreadfully guilty of corrupting Religion and deſtroying Holineſs: according as he who ſhould diſperſe as much falſe Money as he could, were more a Criminal in adulterating the Kings Coin, and abuſing the Nation, than he who fondly ſhould pleaſe himſelf with the luſtre of ſome few baſe pieces in his own private Cabinet. Now I complain that the Diviſions of the Church have brought men to place Godlineſs in points moſt diſtant from its nature, nay, ſome moſt contrary to it: and not only to practice ſo themſelves, but to teach accordingly. I ſhall aſſign only for the preſent a double inſtance.

Firſt, Some men mainly place Godlineſs in being of ſuch or ſuch a Church; that is, in other terms, in being of this or that Sect or Party. And the perſons guilty herein are not meerly ſome weaker and ordinary people (which yet ſome account the greateſt part of Mankind) but divers of a far different Grain; at leaſt as their Diſcourſe and Converſation in other things beſpeaks them. How plauſibly, amongſt men of tolerable judgment, does the following Plea proceed? Out of the True Church there is no Salvation. And the True Church can be but one (For there is *One Body as one Spirit*, *Epheſ.* IV. 4. And we *Believe One Catholick and Apoſtolick Church*, ſaith the *Nicene* Creed) It therefore concerns a man in the firſt place, in the Choice and Entrance upon his Religion, to look hereto, that he joyn himſelf to the true

Church. How few see the Snare which is here laid, or are wary enough to extricate their perplexed minds by distinguishing, that though the *Catholick* Church be but *One*, yet *Particular* Churches may be, and must be *Many*; and of those many, God forbid but we should think several to be true ones, that is, true Members of the one Catholick Church? And 'tis most likely, she's the worst, which ingrosses to her self alone (at least would ingross) the Title of *The True and Catholick*. In the mean while, what a stir has this Question made in Divided Christendom, *Which is the true Church*? What are the *Signs* and *Characters* of it? How many private Conferences, publick Sermons, voluminous Treatises taken upon this Subject? And when men have, from these Signs or Characters agreeing to such or such a Church, in some tolerable measure satisfied themselves to their own apprehension, and concluded such or such A True Church, to which therefore they forthwith addict themselves, is not this generally the next conclusion, that the same is The True Church; and presently this the final Result, that Themselves and all in the *Ark* are safe by being in it? Who sees not that this wile, destructive flattery and delusion, derives its Original from our Divisions? Every divided Party look upon themselves as the Godlier (and consequently *quoad hoc*, the Holier) by how much the purer Worship they conceive their Church to have: and that they take for certain, The *truer* the *Church*, the Purer its Worship, its Sacraments, its Communion; and in fine, the surer its Members. So that with the Multitude this passeth current, Get into the true Church, and as to Religion you are safe: for you are sure of True Sacraments, a saving Ministry, the best sort of Worship,

Worſhip, and what not? Ah, my Brethren! Theſe however in themſelves golden Pipes, and ſacred Conveyances of Grace, to thoſe who uſe them aright, are yet, in themſelves, and as the World goes, *Faciles & Parabiles ritus*, a Godlineſs eaſie to be had, and which may prove as deſtructive as eaſie to be come by, when the outward injoyment hereof is the great matter of our Acquieſcence.

But to examine this Cheat a little more narrowly as well for the more effectual delivery of men from it, as the clearing the Point in hand, That Diviſions have brought men to place Godlineſs in matters moſt contrary to its nature.

Admit I place true Religion, and ſo Godlineſs (very much) in being of this or that Church; I ſay, the Church I am of is either a True one or a Falſe one; one that holds to, or one that has broken off from Catholick Unity. If the later, I am then in a Schiſm by being of it. And then by placing Godlineſs in being of this Church, what do I do but place it in Schiſm? An hopeful ſort of Godlineſs indeed! And if the former, if the Church, in adhereing whereto I reckon my ſelf Godly, be a true one, that is, a ſincere Member of the true Catholick Church, I am never a whit the godlier by my miſtake in over-valuing the Communion of the Church. For 'tis great odds, as the ſtream of mens ſpirits runs, but that my Zeal for ſuch dearly beloved Church, tranſport me into ſuch admiration of it, that, either I ſhall confine Salvation to it, and inſiſt ſo far on the neceſſity of Communion with it, as to forget Catholick Charity; by which means again I am fallen into Schiſm, though of a different

ferent ſort from that before mentioned (and ſtill placing Godlineſs in being of this Church thus ſtrictly, I place Godlineſs in Schiſm): Or elſe reſt in the meer injoyment of thoſe advantages and preeminencies I apprehend by it, running a round of external Duties and Obſervances, but little or not at all concerning my ſelf, as to a real changed heart and renewed ſpirit; and then, the Godlineſs, with which I pleaſe my ſelf, lies only in ſome Formalities and Church Priviledges, which come naturally under what the Apoſtle ſtyles *a Form of Godlineſs*, and which he ſays a man may have, and *deny its Power*; that is, be void of *Holineſs*, *without which no man can ſee the Lord*. And is not this as pernicious a miſtake? Alas, alas my Brethren! 'Tis not the Communion of Saints can ſave men, though it be both our Duty and Intereſt to maintain it. A man may be damned in the pureſt Church on Earth for a Carnal worldly heart, or a diſorderly unholy life, however our Diviſions may delude us into contrary Fanſies.

This kind of men we have ſpoken of are commonly *Zealots* (of one ſide or t'other) But there are another ſort which are *Lukewarm*, indifferent generally to all Religions and Churches in particular. Some Religion perhaps they think 'tis fit there ſhould be, for the better managing the people: and if in their judgment they do proceed to any Specialties, poſſibly they will tell you, 'tis expedient there ſhould be ſeveral Religions, that every man may find one, the profeſſion whereof will ſuit his Humour (A policy, not unlike unto which the Church of *Rome* has now a long time uſed in inventing and maintaining ſo many Religious Orders) Now as they before-mentioned placed

Religion

Religion (and so Godliness, or our Duty to God) in being of what they apprehend to be Gods true Church, so these

Secondly, place it in seeming to be of such or such a Church or Party; for in reality, and as far as Religion is Religion, they neither believe nor own any such thing, nor consequently any Church at all. The other perhaps addicted themselves to Factions and Parties out of Conscience (though haply erroneous) and in the sincerity of their hearts: these out of humour or interest, seem to do so for the present, and when either humour or interest vary, then farewel such espoused Party or Religion. And now let us put the Question in plain English (and as plainly answer it) What do these men place Godliness in? Verily in an Atheistical humoursome Hypocrisy. And is it not true that our Divisions foster and confirm these Wretches Atheistical vein? They seem to themselves rationally defensible in disbelieving all Religion, and our several Churches Testimonies thereof, because the Witnesses are not agreed amongst themselves.

In a word, and to conclude this particular of misplacing Godliness, or deceiving our selves as to its whole nature. It is sure, Godliness primarily consists in a serious Belief of the Being and Nature of God, and in an intire Resignation to him; whence most naturally and sweetly flow all its inward and outwatd acts. But we have above made it evident, Divisions have brought Christendom to that pass, that some men place Godliness in such Practices which resolve into Schism, others in Formalities and Providential Advantages, others in Atheistical and Humoursome Hypocrisie (and not a few are there of each of these sorts):

ſorts) : Now what can be more contrary to real Godlineſs than all theſe ? By what we have ſaid therefore of the miſplacing of Godlineſs, it appears Diviſions ſo vitiate the ſpirits of private men, as to deſtroy real Godlineſs, that is, (the firſt part of Holineſs) in them.

2. Though the Dammage Godlineſs muſt ſuſtain in miſplacing wholly its nature, is the greateſt we can imagine, yet certainly it ſuffers not a little by the mixture of Heterogeneous additions, and on the other hand by detraction of ſome of its Integral Parts, or Offices. And is it not evident, that ſince the Chriſtian Church has been thus rent in pieces by Diviſions, each Party, as if in their own defence, and in juſtification of their proceedings, has made it their buſineſs to ſtand by themſelves, and purſuant hereto moſt have been running further and further from one another into the ſtrangeſt Extreams? Which diſtance muſt be confeſt moſt chiefly viſible in Articles of Faith and Offices of Divine Worſhip. Both theſe, on ſome hands, have been wiſely multiplyed, on others as prodigiouſly, and not without the moſt dreadful Sacriledge, diminiſhed and retrenched. From the multiplication of Articles of Faith amongſt the Papiſts, Believing, with the Multitude, is become only a blind Obedience and Reſolution of ſubmiſſion to the Church. From the like multiplication of Divine Ordinances, the Publick Worſhip with them is moſtly Pageantry and Ceremony, and Private Devotion little elſe but ſome Lip-labour, Bodily Exerciſe, or ſmall Money-matter. Amongſt thoſe who call themſelves Proteſtants, there are a People who have run into contrary heights, and after denying ſome Articles of Faith,

and

and laying aside others as useless, have rejected all positive worship of God, all Prayers, Sacraments, yea even the Ministry of the Word, as belonging only to a lower State and Oeconomy than that they are in. I do not say but these mens Opinions fairly enough derive from some old Romish Fanaticism: however, the men themselves at present pretend the greatest contrariety to *Rome*. Far be it from me totally to excuse all middle and interjacent Parties: but certainly by all these Divisions (in Faith and Worship) Holiness suffers much amongst us, in things appertaining to God.

II. So does it in things appertaining to Men. Though all the Individuals of each Party were Righteous, and ought no Debt of *strict Justice* to one another (so that this part of our Duty to men were no whit at all infringed by our Divisions, the contrary to which is yet most notoriously apparent) notwithstanding there is one Debt, which in St. *Chrysostom*'s language, we must (ἀεὶ ἀποδιδόναι καὶ ἀεὶ ὀφείλειν) always be paying, yet always owing; namely, Charity and Loving one another. *This Debt alone*, of all others, says he, *knows no end*. But how much this part of Holiness suffers by our Factions, is unconceivable, as well as inexpressible. How few of any Party maintain so much as Charitable hopes of one another, much less such Judgment as they would have exercised towards themselves? And hence in every common affair of Life, what abominable Male-construction of one anothers Actions, yea even of Intentions and Thoughts? As if men, rather than not be Uncharitable to one another, were resolved violently to invade the Prerogative of the Almighty, and to become *Judges of*

Hearts. Nay, happy were it with Humane Concerns, if the Uncharitableneſs of Factions ſtuck here; What Detraction, Contempt, Scorn and Reproaches do the Parties mutually proceed to? What Ill-will, Envy, and Ἐπιχαιρεκακία (rejoycing in one anothers Miſeries, as well as Sins and Miſcarriages) every where abounds? Yet further, What contrivances of Miſchiefs upon one another? What unmerciful Intrigues, Plots and Labours to expoſe one another? No ill Offices, I had almoſt ſaid no Diabolical Arts of Trapanning, Circumventing, falſe Accuſing ſpared. Good God! what more contrary to Holineſs? It too plainly appears hence, our Diviſions have trampled upon Juſtice as well as Charity.

But there is one particular ſort of Injuſtice (the genuin, though curſed Off-ſpring of Church-Faction) which I muſt not ſilently paſs over, and that eſpecially is againſt Governours; (though herein the Righteous Judge undoubtedly will alſo one day Pronounce, *They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me that I ſhould not reign over them.*) How little do the Commands of Authority ſignifie with many men? Is it not too generally with ſome grown a Maxim? That which was in it ſelf indifferent, and lawful to be done before it was Commanded by Law, being Commanded, may not be ſubmitted to; ſuch Command being an Invaſion of the Liberty Chriſt has left us. A Principle deſtructive to all Peace and Government, even to the very Root of both; and indeed highly *Unchriſtian*; as being truly but an old ſtrain of ſtubborn Judaiſm (which proved too fatal both to that peoples ſouls and ſtate) To admit no *Chriſt* but what ſhould ſet them above *Cæſar*. But I muſt not expatiate

tiate on this, leſt I ſeem to ſome to forget a promiſe I made in the beginning.

III. It remains now only to ſet forth the Effects of Diviſion upon Holineſs as that comprehends the Duties to a mans ſelf. And of this nature, as well on oneſide as the other, are the High conceits of our ſelves, of our own Judgments, Gifts, Graces, and general Attainments; The ſtrange Confidence we entertain of that ſingular favour God has for us and our Party; whence commonly proceed marvellous *Capriccio's*, Self-flatteries, boaſting of and ſetting up our ſelves (at leaſt reſentments that it is fit others ſhould ſet us) as the Patterns and Meaſures of Holineſs or Reformation. This has ever been the temper of Parties, ſince there were Parties, and ſince Sects entred into the Church. When the old Jewiſh Church was in a manner only Bipartite, or divided but into two great Sects of Phariſees and Sadduces, how did the one value themſelves above the other? The Prophetical Character of them anſwered exactly, *Iſai.* LXV. 5. In their hearts, at leaſt, they ſaid to thoſe who were not of themſelves, *Stand by thy ſelf, come not near to me, for I am holyer than thou.* And however this is ordinarily charged as the fault of one ſort of men amongſt us, I fear there is no Party at all but has too many Members of ſuch arrogant vein.

I do not ſay the Evils taxed under this Head are only ſins againſt a Man's ſelf; They are alſo certainly contrary to Charity, whoſe Property it is, *not to vaunt it ſelf, not to be puffed up, not to behave it ſelf unſeemly* (1 *Cor.* XIII. 4,5.) and ſo againſt our Neighbour; They are contrary to Humility, and that holy awe and reverence we owe to God, and ſo alſo ſins a-

gainſt him: But ſtill, Practices thus complicately ſinful muſt needs be the more oppoſite to Holineſs; and proportionably, ſuch muſt needs be, whatſoever introduces them into the Chriſtian World, and particularly Church Diviſions.

In ſum then, to conclude our proof. It is apparent, let us pretend what we will for Holineſs and Reformation, yet if we either privately foment and lengthen out the Diviſions of the Church, or labour not all in us lies to compoſe and reconcile them, we keep alive thoſe Coals whence we can expect no other than the diſmal flames of a Civil War (a ſtate of things, which above all others depraves National manners, inſomuch that the uſual Tenour of Sobriety is not commonly recovered in an Age or two after) We ruin the Diſcipline of the Church, the great Curb and Cure of Vice amongſt Chriſtian men, provided by Chriſt; We for the main pervert or divert the ordinary means of Sanctification, the Miniſtry of the Word; We ſet open a door for blind Leaders of the blind; We, beſides, otherwiſe contribute much to the vitiating the private ſpirits of men, by introducing (by our ſelves or others) unnatural kinds, offices, and inſtances of Godlineſs, by the like retrenching genuine Godlineſs, by perpetuating neceſſarily uncharitableneſs, unmercifulneſs, injuſtice, and eſpecially Diſobedience to Government, and finally, by cheriſhing the Seeds of Spiritual Pride, Oſtentation, Preſumption, and whatever is contrary to that Meekneſs, Sweetneſs and Comlineſs of Mind which conſtitutes the Chriſtian temper: By all which means, and poſſibly many other unſeen ones, we in real truth ſubvert and deſtroy, what we profeſs moſt Zealous Endeavours for, namely Holineſs and a through Reformation.

Give

Give me leave now, in a word, to reſume the Text, and purſue it, as an Exhortation, in the ſenſe, and with the Deſign I have propounded; *Follow Peace with all men, and Holineſs.* Let us ſtudy and promote the Union of the Church, the accord and agreement of all ſerious Chriſtians, as the moſt effectual mean of a compleat Reformation. Were the good men of the ſeveral Perſwaſions, or the Generality of them, of one piece, of one Communion, Profaneneſs, Vice and Looſeneſs would not find amongſt us where to take Refuge. Men would be compell'd to amend in their own defence, and for meer ſhelter in the Church, the reproach of an Outlier would be ſo intolerable.

I muſt profeſs with all ſincerity, I cannot, in my poor inſight into the ſtate of our Diſſentions, conceive of any poſſibility of an Union of all honeſt minded men of the different Perſwaſions amongſt us, that call themſelves Proteſtants, but by the coming in of ſuch ſeveral Diſſenters into the Eſtabliſht Church. The Approaches perhaps muſt be Gradual; and the Methods of effecting them I will confeſs beyond my Comprehenſion: Only I will adventure to ſay, I am apt to think *the ſweeter the better.* Yet though I dare not pretend to ſhew how all may be done, I ſee no reaſon to apprehend the thing, as ſome do, not feaſible. Are we not on all hands ſenſible that the things, which keep us aſunder, are far from being of ſo great moment, as are the Reformation of the ſcandalous Multitude, and the Edification of the Pious? Why then may we not hope, but by ſuch mutual advances one towards another, which the aforeſaid ſenſe of things is apt to beget, we may in ſome time meet? And why

ſhould

ſhould we hope it, and not honeſtly with all our might and skill endeavour it? We ſee the abominable Vanity and Self-flattery in pretending to a Zeal for Holineſs, when we are Lukewarm to Peace, and adherents to Faction. Let us be ready to ſacrifice ſomewhat to peace, if it be only to approve our ſelves not to be Hypocrites in our Pretences to Holineſs or Saintſhip. I ſpeak this to men of all Parties, and particularly to all conſiderable of our own Church. I take it to be a greater fault in Conformiſts to be ſtiff and averſe to Union than in any other ſort, inaſmuch as the Principles we profeſs are more truly Catholick and Charitable than thoſe of any others I know. Let all therefore be prevailed with, to unite their Endeavours and whatſoever they have of intereſt, to promote ſo great a bleſſing. Have we any power over our own ſpirits, any influence upon others, any Intereſt at the Throne of Grace, let all be imployed.

1. Let us never ceaſe by Conſideration and Prayers, night and day, enforcing upon our ſelves all the Obligations to, and Counſels of Peace and Union, which we can contrive or collect; let us not ceaſe, I ſay, to enforce them, till we feel our hearts really brought under the power of them, and are able to approve our Conſciences to God, that he, who knows all in us, knows we are from the bottom of our hearts ſtudious of Peace, and will do all we can in our places to compaſs it: Eſpecially, that we will in all meet things deny our ſelves, and recede from whatever on our parts may be ſpared, which really hinders it. Certainly, my Brethren, Peace could not be far off, could all particular men, eſpecially thoſe of note and power on all ſides, go before God, and appeal to him, as the

the Searcher of all hearts, that they are ſincerely reſolved, to the utmoſt of their might, to purſue Union, and bring their own and their Brethrens ſpirits together. We may many of us pretend to this, but it is to be feared, ſuch pretence is but a Copy of our Countenance: It has been ingenuouſly confeſt, even by ſome Conſciencious men who diſſent, that if our Hearts were not further from Peace than our Principles or our Pens, it would ſoon be effected. Let us put it home to our ſelves, Why ſhould it be ſo? Nay how can it be ſo, without abominable Hypocriſie? Either we muſt bring our hearts to the temper perſwaded, or farewel our Saintſhip: We are but vile Pretenders to what we are not, and in truth Self-deceivers, and falſe to God and the World.

2. Let us imploy all the Intereſt we hold in others, whether in any Grandees and powerful Patrons that we have, or in Familiars and Friends, Followers and Diſciples, with any and all, with whom we can hope our entreaties, power, or any kind of importunity can prevail, let us be dealing effectually, that they would in their places joyn their Endeavours, and work together to the ſweetning and uniting the minds of good men. Let us not reſt, till we have made them (what we are ſuppoſed to have made our ſelves) reſolute, cordial, and zealous in this bleſſed Deſign.

But more eſpecially, if any of us, impartially reflecting before God upon our paſt Life and Actions, find we have influenced any towards the preſent Diſſentions, Let us remember their Schiſm is ours, their Uncharitableneſs ours, all they do to defend or diſperſe their dividing Principles is ſtill an Accumulation of our Guilt.

Guilt. Let therefore no poor ſhamefacedneſs, or baſe tenderneſs of our own Repute and Eſteem, with-hold us one day from acknowledging our Errour, and from recalling and regaining ſuch into the Unity of the Church, whom unhappily (though poſſibly with a good meaning) we drew from thence. And let us do this inſtantly, by the firſt opportunity we can lay hold on; *to day, while it is called to day.* God knows, how little time there may be left us for ſuch work: And it would be, we will eaſily believe, as fruitleſs an attempt, as dreadful inhancement of our Woe, ſhould we come one day to be at *Our Father* Abraham, *ſend* Lazarus *unto my Brethren, that they come not into this place of Torment*, the reward as well as original of Schiſm and Contention.

Laſtly, That no ſtone may be left unturn'd in ſo heavenly an Engagement, let us all try our Intereſts with the *God of Peace*, and ply his Mercy-ſeat with our Supplications and Tears night and day, that he would pity his Church here, rending and tearing out her own Vitals with her own hands. Let us pray that if there be in our hearts any latent, and to us unſeen Seeds of Diſcord, God would open our eyes, and enable us to winnow them out of our ſelves and the World; that he will on all hands remove Errour, obſtinacy and ſelf-will; and that he will pardon them too, to the end our paſt guilt may not blaſt the acceptance and ſucceſs of our Repentance. Let us at leaſt thus far obey the Injunction in the Text of *Following Peace*, as with pure and fervent hearts to *Pray for the Peace of Jeruſalem*, if we have no other means of effecting it. This is an Endeavour out of none of our Orb or Power. And would the Proteſtant

teſtant World (at home I mean) take up this ſpirit, and conſpire in this practice, God would certainly ſoon accompliſh, what man looks upon as impoſſible, The Union of Proteſtants: *For with him nothing is impoſſible.*

Now the God who *maketh men to be of one mind in an houſe*, ſend down the Spirit of Peace and Union into his Church, which is the Houſe of him the Living and True God.

To whom, &c.

The End.

Poſtſcript.

HAving juſt now read over theſe Two Sermons which I have tranſcribed ſince I preached, I am not a little thereby confirmed in the belief of an Obſervation I have long ago made (or taken up, I cannot ſay whether) That a man may with leſs danger of expoſing himſelf preach many Sermons than print one: Thoſe Defects and Crudities, which the ſpeed and (with ſome more happy perſons) the Grace of Pronunciation covers, are eaſily perceived by the mature attention of the Peruſer. That this will be the Fate of divers Paſſages in theſe foregoing Diſcourſes, I am ſenſible enough, and perhaps ſee the Particulars: But the Deſign I purſue in them is ſo neceſſary to be promoted by more Advocates than it has in good earneſt, that I could not prevail with my ſelf, through any fear of Cenſures, to ſuppreſs my poor, however cordial, endeavours therein. Nor did I think it fit in the Copy for the Preſs, to make any ſuch Supplies or Changes, as in themſelves I might think but requiſite, leſt it ſhould be objected by any, I preached not what I print. Wherefore I am content that all

pass in the form it is. I will only admonish, that the same Arguments, which I have used in the Second Sermon to prove our present Divisions destructive to Holiness, will also prove that other part (which I have too lightly touch't) That the Union we persuade, would certainly produce more Holiness or Reformation of the Publick Manners, than any other Expedient we can easily imagine: Only I had not time to apply them distinctly to both parts; and to those, who will read this, 'tis amply enough to have suggested thus much.

There may possibly occur divers Passages in both Sermons, which some may say want Truth; nay, the Contradictions to which I have read in print not many days ago: I can only say, I spoke them not with a design of contradiction; and I both did, and still do judge them real Truths. For instance, (*Serm.* 1. *pag.* 22.) I say, *We* [Conformists] *doubt not but in this our obedience we please God, and are not unserviceable unto men.* Mr. *Baxter* on the contrary, in his Apology for the Non-conformists Ministry (which Book I shall much cite in what follows) applies to us, more than once, as I remember, that passage of the Apostle touching the unbelieving Jews, (1 *Thessal.* II. 15.) *That we please not God, and are contrary to all men.* I believe in my Conscience he is mistaken, and that what I said is true. Nay further I will tell him, and all the World, and God is my Witness herein, I at first obeyed with a design to serve God; and I bless my God, I do both serve him, with a pure Conscience, in the way of Conformity, and have the comfort and joy thereof in my own breast daily; nor do I trouble my self, or can I help it, if prejudicate men are of another mind.

Pag 235. &c.

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Again, *pag.* 30. of the ſame Sermon, I ſaid, *Preſbyterians and Independents could not agree among themſelves*; no not, *when they had an Aſſembly packt moſtly of themſelves.* Yet many have lately magnified their Agreement, and ſome have told us, that *Aſſembly* was *almoſt all of Epiſcopal conformable men.* Were it worth the labour, I could prove the truth of what I ſaid; nay, I could prove much more. Firſt, as to their great concord, I ſay they were ſo far from agreeing then, that they are not agreed yet: For whereas ſome could come in to our Church, upon ſuch terms as they are pleaſed to inſinuate under the name of a *Compreheſion* (namely the Moderate Preſbyterians) They of the Congregational way *cannot, according to their Judgments, allow of our Parochial Churches, nor a Book of Liturgy; but do chooſe to worſhip God in the way of their Gathered or Separate Congregations*, and ſo need an *Indulgence.* Then as to Mr. *Baxter*'s demand, Were not almoſt all the *Weſtminſter-Aſſembly* Epiſcopal Conformable men when they came thither? I could ſay, No, not in *their hearts*, as appear'd by *their fruits:* (Thoſe four of five that were, had no comfort to be amongſt them.) Hear part of the Preamble of that Ordinance, by which this conformable Aſſembly was called, *Whereas it has been declared and reſolved by the Lords and Commons aſſembled in Parliament, that the preſent Church Government by Archbiſhops, Biſhops, their Chancellors, Commiſſaries, Deans, Deans and Chapters, Archdeacons, and other Eccleſiaſtical Officers, depending upon the Hierarchy, is juſtly offenſive and burthenſome to the Kingdom, a great impediment to Reformation and growth of Religion, and very prejudicial to the State and Government*

Mr. Baxt. Apol. N.C. p. 90, 204. &c.

Bill for Accommodation. pag. penult.

Jun. 12. 1643. Scob. Coll. p. 42.

vernment of this Kingdom; and that therefore they are reſolved that the ſame ſhall be taken away; and that ſuch a Government ſhall be ſettled in the Church, as may be agreeable to God's Holy Word, [Epiſcopacy then in theſe mens judgments was not] *and moſt apt to procure and preſerve the peace of the Church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of* Scotland, &c. What Epiſcopal men would have anſwered this call, or theſe ends, any otherwiſe than by proteſting againſt them? Did theſe things tend to peace? I could and would give a further anſwer. I could tell him too, who it is, that through habitual prejudice, ſelf-flattery, and unhappy errour, is a *falſifier of Hiſtory*, and that *in the very memory of them*, in whoſe times theſe things were acted; and particularly in fixing the *war* upon an *Eraſtian party in Parliament* (when all the World knows, a People ever known to be of more bloody Principles, and whom I will not name, for peace-ſake, both ſcattered and blew the Coals, whence aroſe thoſe Combuſtions:) but that, I ſay, I conceive, my Anſwer would no more conduce to peace, than his reminding the Nation of thoſe things, which at other times he would have forgotten: I would have ſet forth all this. In ſhort, he and all his Abettors muſt know, the Catalogues of that *Parliament*, of that *Aſſembly*, are in our hands; the Copies of their *Speeches*, the Journals of their *Votes*, *Tranſactions*, &c. are all to be produced: and, to ſay nothing of the *Covenanters*, the Commiſſioners (both of Miniſtry and Laiety) named in the *Form of Church Government* (which the Aſſembly had been ſo long a hammering) *to be uſed in the Church of* England *and* Ireland, all theſe mens names, qualities, principles, and procedure, are notorious in print.

print. Such publick, and (as I may justly call them) Authentick Records, as these, must and will be credited, when private persons, whose interest and unhappiness it is to tax others with their own faults, will scarce find belief. But I forget my self: however I followed another; and sad it is, when one who pretends for peace, in his very pleas for it leads us out of the way to it. I have done with this kind of Discourse, when I have besought my Reader not to account any thing said in my Sermons false, because some have been pleased to contradict and *hector* the Truth.

I did not at first intend even thus much of Reflexion: for I proposed not to my self in this *Postscript*, to Apologize for my *Sermons*, nor to answer other mens Imputations on us and our Church; but to proceed to such Particulars in order to my *Pacificatory design*, as were less fit for a Sermon, and so still to drive the same Nail further home. To this purpose therefore I shall take the boldness (which the Charity of my intentions I hope may obtain pardon for) to observe to the *Dissenters*, where in some of their Writings, which I have seen, while they plead for peace, they openly blast it; and wherein otherwise, notwithstanding all their *pleas*, their own *practices* are evidently wanting to the design of *Union*. And herein I desire to be hear'd only with so much candour and calmness as I shall use.

He that appears in the Front of the Dissenters, for *Peace*, is Mr. *Baxter*: He says in his *Epistle Dedicatory* of his *Apology for the Nonconformists Ministry*, he *has been begging in vain these Twenty years for Peace and Concord, of the Order of the Bishops*; nay (*pag.* 1.) he *has tried in vain too, what silence*

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in this kind would do: yet after all, *before the expiring of his gasping hopes, he resolved once more to resist dispair, and make another effort.* It is really to be lamented that both his and other good mens endeavours to this purpose, have been no more successful: but being we all, who either speak or write on this Subject, ought not to be thought any other than serious and in good earnest, let us be content to consider each of us in what Particular our endeavours are deficient or peccant. The discovery of this may haply help us a little into *the way of Peace.* And let not Mr. *Baxter* be displeased with me, if, being to examine some *writings* of his of this kind, I first, with intire good will, both to him and mankind, deliver freely my thoughts of *him*; I will assure him I expect one day to answer for all I say: and now let his and all mens Charity judge of my Veracity.

I really believe him at the bottom a very good man, truly loving and fearing God, and passionately zealous for the Conversion, Edification, and Salvation of Souls: When ever he treats of the things that belong to another life, the sense and concernment he has for them appears in his very language; *Videtur ipsius oratio non in labiis nasci, sed in pectore:* Those who are not strangers to Holy Affections, must needs feel a kind of sympathy, which, beyond all suspicion, and above all other Arguments, will demonstrate thus much to them: I will also add, that 'tis most sure he is excessively studious and laborious, and as great an Instance as many Ages will shew, what Industry and Parts may do, without the Aids of Regular and Academical Education: But I do not look upon him, any more than other mortal men, to be without his Infirmities; and of what nature his chiefly may be, a man

man may not improbably conjecture, from the mortified ſtate of his Body, and that Opinion, which he is ſaid to have aſſerted, that *A man might live without any Actual Sin:* Sure it is, it has been his great unhappineſs, to have been long in the top of a Faction of his own making; which Faction, being very Heterogeneous (neither Epiſcopal, Presbyterian, Independent or Eraſtian, as himſelf ſeems to confeſs, but a Compoſition or Temper, I will not ſay, an *Amſterdam* of all) and beſides very Numerous, he has paſt too much without brotherly reproof; and perhaps is not now ſo capable of it: Moſt have cenſured him, too many perhaps expos'd him; others on the contrary admired and extoll'd him; few or none have dealt, together faithfully and candidly, with him or with his Writings: I have done ſo hitherto, and ſhall all along to my poor ability.

Biſhop *Morley's* Letter, p. 13.

Apolog. p. 73.

But leſt any ſhould ſuſpect me, being a Perſon of different perſwaſion and intereſt from him (as may be conceived) to ſpeak out of prejudice, I will take the liberty, as he does ſome times, in his forementioned *Apology*, to tell him a ſtory or two: I had ſeen him but twice, once *en paſſant*, and another time in the Pulpit (nor did I ever ſee him ſince) when being choſen out of *Weſtminſter* School to *Cambridge*, I waited on a good man, who had ſhewn me diverſe never to be forgotten kindneſſes, and eſpecially by whoſe Miniſtry I had made ſome proficiency in Godlineſs, (though I muſt ſay, the grounds of it I had had elſewhere) I waited, I ſay, on ſuch a reverend Perſon, to pay my thanks and take my leave; and at my parting, amongſt other very good *advices*, he caution'd me not to leave the Univerſity too ſoon, as the manner of thoſe, who went ripe thither, was: *For*

they, ſaid he, *that do ſo, are never able* to wade into that depth of Learning, *which they might eaſily have done; and beſides that, for want of having gone through the whole Circle of Arts and Sciences regularly, they too often become opinionative, furious, unable to bear liberal conference or oppoſition, though it be by way only of Diſpute or Brotherly Admonition: As*, ſaid he, *we have now experience in a very godly, but ſtrangely fierce man, Mr.* Baxter *by name, who though he will ſpeak very well, yet is not able to endure being gainſaid in any thing.* (If the Gentleman be alive, and read this, I am ſure he will acknowledge many of his own Expreſſions; and ſay, if I have erred from them, it is rather *in partem faventiorem.*) He added, *There is a great deal of truth in that Example of old* Lilies *uſing*;

Adde quòd, Ingenuas didiciſſe fideliter artes,
Emollit mores nec ſinit eſſe feros:

Had Mr. Baxter *been bred at Diſputations, or in the Schools, he would manage himſelf with more temper.* This Gentleman, if alive, I am ſure is a *Nonconformiſt.* This was all I had ever heard of Mr. *Baxter*, till from *Cambridge* making ſome Excurſions into my own Country, I there found him cried up as *the Apoſtle* of thoſe parts; and his Books flying there much abroad, I met with his *Gildas Salvianus*, which I read with great concernment, again and again; in ſhort, ſuch was the impreſſion it made on me, that I ever after believed, whatever infirmities Mr. *Baxter* might have, he was certainly a man moſt faithful in his Miniſtry. Coming down again in the Year 1658. as I remember, I met with his *Holy Commonwealth*, and read a great part of it, much ſtartled thereat, and with great concernment pitying him,

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as to my apprehenſion, out of his Element; yet I can truly ſay, loving and reverencing him for that I had before read in him. From that time till 1663. I remember my ſelf to have heard or read little or nothing of him: And then I was told by a Reverend Prelate, that at the Conference of the *Savoy*, Mr. *Baxter* being demanded what would ſatisfie him? ſhould reply, *All or Nothing*; or words to that effect. Upon this, I reflected on what that Grave *Divine*, before-mentioned, told me, when I went to the *Univerſity*: And ſince that time I have only occaſionally, and as by accident they have faln into my hands, read any thing of his Works, till now this piece of his, which I am about to cenſure, came in my way: And from hence the World may eſtimate, how far I am acquainted with, or prejudiced againſt Mr. *Baxter*.

Truly Peace is ſo amiable thing, that it would recommend any man to me who comes with offers towards it; much more Mr. *Baxter*, whom I have ſo long looked upon as a Conſcientious man: It is not eaſie to aſſign greater Advantages to the Perſon of a *Peace-maker*, than what flow from Mortification, Induſtry, Age, Experience, Holineſs and Zeal for Peace: Mr. *Baxter*, to any one that knows ſo much as, and no more of him than, I do, would not ſeem, with the Multitude, to want any repute for theſe. When therefore I ſaw this Book, inſcribed, *The third Part of his Plea for Peace*, I was very ſorry the other two had eſcaped me, and expected much from this: But, to my great grief, have found my ſelf only much diſappointed. Now becauſe I know, Mr. *Baxter* is able to do much with his Followers towards *Peace*, and becauſe further, I am well aſſured he will be writing as long as he is able, I have reſolved to adventure the

detecting how vaſily, in what he has writ, at leaſt in what I have ſeen of his, on this Subject, he comes ſhort, perhaps errs, from his pretended Mark; to the end, that both he and his Partners, in their future attempts, may take the better aim: For certainly were there never ſo much Humility, Meekneſs, Charity, and Patience in the World, were all our men of the moſt forbearing and moſt forgiving Spirits imaginable, (which God knows is on all hands wanting) yet the way he takes is not the way to Peace.

Firſt, I complain, Mr. *Baxter*'s *manner of managing* his Plea, is mightily deficient, I may ſay culpable: He muſt bear with me, if, as I promiſed, I am faithful to him; and tell him, he pleads for Peace in a moſt unpeaceable and provoking ſort: The *Apology* before-mentioned, (after the *Epiſtle Dedicatory* (the deſign of which alſo ſeems to be, to inſinuate a kind of Schiſm, even amongſt our very Engliſh Biſhops) after that Epiſtle, I ſay, and a few of the initial Pages) ſwarms all along with the ſtrangeſt Suggeſtions, Accuſations, Aggravations, with the moſt biting Sarcaſms and Reproaches, which could well be ſtuff't into ſo much Paper: I would not be miſtaken; I am not at all incenſed by them; only I really mourn before God, to ſee the Symptomes of ſuch a Spirit in ſuch a man: Good God! that men, in whom otherwiſe appears ſo much of the *life* and *power of Godlineſs*, ſhould thus expoſe it, themſelves, and their Chriſtian Brethren to the Laughter and Scorn of the Common Adverſaries, *Papiſts* and *Atheiſts*. I proteſt faithfully, I am more concern'd for the credit of *Religion* in general, amidſt theſe bitter Aſperſions, than for any diſgrace, our Church, or her Friends can ſuffer from all charged on us: I am ſorry to ſay it, His whole

whole vein of Writing, in this Piece, betraies the want of that Singleneſs of Heart, that Candour, Humility, Charity, Sweetneſs and Æquanimity, which not only the Deſign of *Peace* and *Union*, but the very Eſſence and Conſtitution of a *Chriſtian Spirit* indiſpenſably requires: God forbid, any ſhould take their Meaſures hence, of what temper Godly men are, and what is the language they uſe: It cannot be expected, but I ſhould give a few Inſtances to make good this Charge.

1. Then, I cannot but confeſs, it is true, there were many more of the Diſſenters ſilenced, than we could have wiſht; and God grant there be not one day found much of *their own fault* herein (ſome People have talked of a *Combination* or *Pact* amongſt themſelves, that except they might have their own will throughout, *they would make the World know*, *what a breach they could make*, and how conſiderable they were). But yet it is not fair to over-reckon, knowingly and in ordinary courſe, two hundred in the Sum, as Mr. *Baxter* and *others* do, [*pag.* 155. 210. and in the very Title Page, *&c.*] thereby to ſwel the accompt to the greater *Odium*, by complaining roundly Two thouſand. This I muſt conclude to be done knowingly, for ſometimes he only ſays One thouſand eight hundred; as *pag.* 151. *&c.*

2. Where the Execution has been ſo vaſtly milder than the Law, where ſo much Mercy and Connivance has been ſhewn, that I am confident, there is not the moſt rigorous Biſhop in the three Kingdoms, but could give many more Inſtances of his Clemency and Forbearance, than the Law will juſtifie, there not only never to acknowledge this kindneſs, but to be oftner than the Sheets occur in his Book (I will juſtifie the ac-

compt) sometimes twice or thrice in a Page, * inculcating or upbraiding to us their *Imprisonments*, seems to have some other Design than *Supplicating for Peace:* Such ingeminated and undue Accusations of those whom we Petition, are strange Arguments from Petitioners.

* He is not content to do this in English so oft, but in Latin too. *In Præfat. Methodi Christian. Theolog.*

3. The same must I say much more of the possessing the World, The Bishops and Church-men are likely to promote, or would be glad of those Severities to be executed upon them, which their Souls abhor to think of, and which the pretended Sufferers, by no Laws, nor so much as by the inclination of the Lawmakers (as far as ever yet could appear) were at all in danger of. Thus *pag.* 197. *Blood was never yet of a light Digestion.* [I pray God it have not been to some.] *Nebuchadnezzars Furnace devoured the Executioners, &c.* Who would not think from hence, That the Laws had made *Nonconformity* as Capital, as what was called *Heresy* in Queen *Mary*'s days? Or that the Statute *De Hæretico Comburendo* were by the Bishops reinforc't, which contrarily has been lately repeal'd. Again, *pag.* 200. *And you must consider also, that if Blood and Destruction be the means you trust to, you must set up a Shambles or Trade of Butchery, and make it the Profession of your Lives.* Pag. 202. *And then the whole Country will take notice, how many worse men you leave alive, which will encrease the Odium.* I am confident Mr. *Baxter* does not believe any of us are guilty of such Inclinations, and therefore whether he acts like a Christian, in such suggestions as these, let him ask himself: Yet he goes on, again and again, in the same strain, *Pag.* 203. *But especially forget not that the number of Nonconformists in* England, *is so great, that it will weary the*

the Hangman to dispatch them; or Executioners will scarce be found: For what if you hang a Thousand, or Eighteen hundred Ministers, &c. Pag. 209. *Believe it, Hanging or Banishing Hundreds or Thousands will not do your Business, but make it worse. ——And if you banish or kill all that are against you, Land will be very cheap, and Houses cheaper; and others will call that Solitude, which you call Concord, Uniformity, Peace, &c.* I am weary of transcribing such Language, and sorry to find men, who would take it very ill not to be thought Conscientious, against their Consciences to impute that to their Brethren, which themselves do not believe they would ever attempt, nay, which they abhor in the least to desire: Good Lord forgive!

4. I must needs look upon his *aggravating* his own and the Dissenters sufferings, beyond truth, I am sure beyond Probabilities, to have proceeded from the same want of temper. *Pag.* 142. He tells us, *Some of the ejected Ministers* are so reduced, and find so little succour, that they *live upon brown bread and water.* I will only, in Answer hereunto make, and I do hereby make, a solemn and serious Invitation of all those Protestant Ministers in my Diocese, nay, of all of them in the whole Province, who are thus low, I invite them, I say, hereby to my Table every day in the year; They shall freely eat as I do, and Welcome in God's Name. But it is yet an higher strain which we have, *pag.* 153. *Some have died through the effects of want.* I have heard so indeed of divers of our own Churches Clergy, ejected in the days of *Usurpation*; and I have reason, from some I knew, to believe it: But Mr. *Baxter* must pardon me, if I tell him, I am very sure there is more Liberality and Charity

Charity amongſt the Brethren, than that any ſuch things could come to paſs; except men were reſolved wilfully to conceal their own Conditions, and throw themſelves away in ſome diſcontented Humour: But this I take only for a *Figure* which he uſes, beyond the Rule in Oratory, *& uſque ad nauſeam.* We have it again, *pag.* 210. Having told us after his uſe of the *Two thouſand ſilenced Miniſters of late*, he adds to that Sum, *and the many that have died in and by Impriſonment*, (which we are told of again, *pag.* 180.) as if, beſides that vaſt number ſilenced, there were many others that fared much worſe. We muſt profeſs all theſe things are new to us, never heard of before; and, as Mr. *Baxter* ſays well, upon a like indefinite Accuſation (*pag.* 145.) *All proof* (in ſuch caſes) *muſt be of individuals*; ſo, till ſuch proof be brought, he muſt excuſe our Faith, as we are content herein to excuſe his Charity. Again, *pag.* 194. *We will be thankful to be under no ſeverer uſage than Colliers and Bargemen and Seamen, than begging Rogues and Vagabonds have.*

Ficta voluptatis cauſâ ſint proxima veris.

5. Of the ſame nature are his *Altitudes* touching the Conformity by Law required. *Pag.* 189. *Subſcribe, That we have not miſtaken a word in all theſe three Books, &c.* [We will ſuppoſe by the three Books he means the *Liturgy*, *Canons*, and *Homilies*: but what by the, *&c.* in which we pretend to be infallible, as he inſinuates, we know not; unleſs it be a little Art to make ignorant People ſurmiſe more than he durſt affirm.] *Or elſe you ſhall not preach the Goſpel of Salvation, nor labour to ſave Peoples Souls, nor perſwade them to think on another life.* Yes, in *pr*-

vate as much of this as you pleaſe; or not to above *five* at a time, that are not of the *Family*. The ſame in ſenſe we have again, *pag.* 219. *We cannot ſubſcribe that your three Books are infallible to a word*, &c. I doubt not but Mr. *Baxer* knows a man may ſubſcribe, with good Conſcience, to that, which he does not know infallibly to be true: There are many things, which both he and I verily believe, yet we are not infallibly ſure we are not miſtaken: If I have a fair and clear perſwaſion or ſatisfaction grounded hereon, That, though there be Arguments on the contrary ſide, yet they are ſuch which I judge honeſtly anſwered, but on the ſide I take, the Arguments are far the ſtronger, and not ſatisfactorily anſwerable as I ſee; I ſay, I may *ſubſcribe*, with very good Conſcience, that I receive ſuch Doctrine, *Lubens & ex animo* (for I do ſo) though perhaps I receive it not as of ſtrictneſs neceſſary to Salvation, or as an Article of Faith: But neither is that aſſent required in the Subſcription: We ſubſcribe only with a deſign of Peace and Union: The very Articles are intitled, *Articles agreed upon——for the avoiding of diverſities of Opinions*. I could tell Mr. *Baxter*, that ſomewhere in this his Book, if my memory miſtake not, he ſays he durſt not reject ſuch an one, who ſhould not ſubſcribe he believed every Book of the Old Teſtament (as perhaps a Chapter of *Eccleſiaſtes*, or the Book of *Canticles*) or ſome other like piece, to be infallibly Canonical: yet I doubt not but he ſubſcribed, and can in Conſcience ſubſcribe the *ſixth* amongſt the 39 *Articles*. Nay, *pag.* 167. *The Nonconformiſts offer to ſubſcribe* (I fear with ſome exception) *the ſame Doctrine of the Church of* England, *as the Conformiſts do in the* 39 *Articles and the Book of Homilies*. Yet neither do the

Conformists, nor Nonconformists, believe every word in those Books to be infallible; but they judge them a *wholsome mean of Peace*, and by their subscription are bound not to teach contrary: What needed then those terms, *subscribe, we have not mistaken a word*, (Did any one ever say so?) that these three Books *are infallible to a word*, &c. These heights serve only to conciliate hatred, and the reputation of cruelty to us, and so to blast Peace.

6. I will only ask Mr. *Baxter* himself, whether he thinks, that imputing to men gross ignorance of their Office, unbelief of Religion, obdurateness beyond Examples, and the like, are apt terms to gain mens hearts, and unite us and them? Yet all these, and worse than these, as far as worse can be, we have abundantly from his hand. *Pag.* 2. He accuses the *Clergy at the Savoy*, that is, those Bishops, Doctors and diverse the Learnedest men in the three Kingdoms (perhaps in *Europe*) with whom he there treated, of having *spoiled the work at that season, for want of skill.* But this is Modesty in Mr. *Baxter* yet. *Pag.* 89. *Alas! that* England *must suffer so much, while the Bishops are learning to rule and do their Office, yea, learning what weaker persons* (*i.e.* himself, *lin.* 15.) *easily perceive. Alas! that so many thousand souls must pay so dear for a few mens experience.* Pag. 195. *I shall give you reasons that will make you know it, if you have but the understanding of ordinary men.* This as to the ignorance and sottishness, yea even of those of our Party, who are ablest, such, I say, as were those at the *Savoy*: Poor Dr. *Sanderson*, Dr. *Morley*, Dr. *Gunning*, Dr. *Pierson*, &c. that had not the *understanding of Ordinary men.* Then as to our Atheistical, Irreligious Temper,

per, *pag.* 190. *O! what a plague it is to the Church and World, to have Miniſters, that when they read of the neceſſity of Knowledge, Holineſs and Salvation, do neither believe Chriſt, nor themſelves!* Laſtly, as to Obdurateneſs, *pag.* 235. *Neither the Wars, nor laſting Plagues, nor dreadful Flames which followed, move you,* ſays he, *to ſee ſo great and grievous ſins.*——— No nor *the inſtances of the Obduration of* Pharaoh, *and the Phariſees, with the Conſequents, make you afraid, leſt wrath ſhould come upon you to the uttermoſt.*

7. It would be indeed endleſs, to ſet down thoſe ſeveral Paſſages he has, which (in humane appearance) could have no other deſign than to expoſe our Church and Clergy: To this purpoſe, the corrupt Manners, not unjuſtly taxed in the Romiſh Clergy, both by Ancient and more Modern Cenſors of them, are carefully ſummed up, and a charitable ſuggeſtion made, that our Lives are *the Commentary with which they are to be read*, pag. 172, 173, 174, 175. And becauſe many Readers haply underſtand not Latin, the ſame or worſe Characters of us are ſcattered and inſinuated up and down throughout the Book in Engliſh. *Pag.* 50. *According to this rule, which we diſſent from, all the World ſhould be ſuffered to be hanged and damned for ever, rather than a Conformiſt ſhould loſe a game at Cheſs, or a cup of Sack, or abate a Ceremony.* And again, at the bottom of the ſame Page; *Were I of this opinion, I ſhould not ſtick to make merchandiſe of Souls, and to ſell an hundred for a Benefice, and twenty thouſand for a Biſhoprick, nor to give over preaching, &c.* Then as to our Labours, and what we do in diſcharge of our Miniſtry, hear how vile all that is, as well as our Lives

and Hearts. *Pag.* 203. *If these Preachers*, speaking of the Nonconformists, *would have talked a little half-sense* (as they do often, and print it too) *and have read a cold Oration, and lived like those that have little sense of God and Heaven, and would save men by a charm of words and shews, without serious Godliness and Christianity, they might have had Maintenance, and as much Honour as such men as these can put upon them. But judicious, serious, hearty godliness is intolerable to all the fleshly Tribe, whose Mind neither is nor can be subject to the Law of God, to which their interest and disposition hath an Enmity.* I again will return nothing hereto, but only ask whether these things tend to Peace? Nay, do they not evidently infer, That no Peace ought to be with us? For if *Holiness* be the Condition and Measure of *Peace*; with such men, as he makes us, what Peace can genuine Christians enter or maintain? Or finally, is this agreeable to his own Principles expressed, *pag.* 8? That we ought not *to vilifie our Brethren, and represent them as Odious and Intolerable, and overlook that of Christ which is amiable in them.*

8. But as to some of our particular Persons, we would have borne more silently such Calumnies (though there are enough of us, that could never play a Game at Chess in our lives (the doing of which, in season, notwithstanding, we take not to be a sin) nor ever made merchandise of Souls, nor have left off preaching, *&c.*) we would have borne this, I say, without complaint, were he not pleased to deal as unkindly, to say no worse, with the very Constitution it self. It is small, perhaps, that he says our *Articles*, to which we require subscription, are *not intelligible, or have contrary meanings to fit the*

the use of every Subscriber, pag. 122. (of which imputation perhaps I may speak anon.) Yet that is not so easily to be passed by, that in order to the fixing *Looseness* upon our Principles and Cause (to use his terms) *i.e.* in plain English, on our Laws and Church, he accuses the Laws and Practice of the Church of loosness, in seven Particulars; and of those seven Propositions he brings, five are notoriously false, whether he knew it or no, I will not say; *viz.* 1, 3, 4, 5, 7: The Second is impertinent (for it pronouncing only touching *baptizing Infants dying before actual sin*, can be no incouragement to loosness of life; and the damning of Children for the Vices of their immediate Parents, is a Doctrine which I believe Mr. *Baxter* would be loath to be put upon to make good) and the Sixth is an uncertain Inference of his own from the words of the Liturgy taken *in nequiorem sensum*: Too tedious would it be to speak severally to each: In short, to them all I say; No person, by the present Law of the Church, is to be *Confirmed* till he *understand* in some good measure, as well as be able to *repeat* the words of the *Catechism*, being *presented* (and therefore *approved*) as such, *by the Minister*: This is plain enough from the *Rubricks*, and from the Preface to the *Office of Confirmation*. Next, No person is to *Communicate* till *Confirm'd*, or, in case of necessity, be *desirous* of Confirmation, which desire thereof in probability imports an Understanding and some sense of Religion; at least, herein the Minister is Judge, and the Admission of such will be the fault of the Minister, not of the Law: *Ignorance* therefore is *provided* against (especially if gross) by the Order of *Confirmation*. And as to *Scandal*, the *Rubrick* is severe enough: The Minister (alone) is not only

only to ſuſpend the ſcandalous perſon from the Communion, but to ſignifie it within fourteen days to the *Ordinary*, that ſuch ſcandalous Members of the Church may be proceeded againſt according to her Laws. Further, the Miniſter is to admit no Child to Baptiſm without God-fathers and Godmothers; nor any to undertake that truſt, but ſuch who have received the Communion. Now what Communicants, that is (it is to be hoped) what underſtanding, conſcientious, ſerious perſons, will become Sureties and Sponſors for the Chriſtian breeding up of the Children of Atheiſts, Infidels and Scorners *of Religion, Chriſt, and the Holy Scripture*, except they be well aſſured the Children ſhall be under their power, as to the direction of their Education, that is to ſay, retrived out of the hands of ſuch wicked Parents, to be bred in a Chriſtian ſort? And if any ſuch perſons will become Godfathers and Godmothers to ſuch Children, and will ſo promiſe, why ſuch Child may not be baptized, and that without any detriment to ſerious Religion, I muſt profeſs I ſee no reaſon: To inſiſt on the Faith of the Parents, may, I confeſs, do ſome Parents good (though he who will not be vertuous for the ſake of his own Soul, will ſcarce become ſuch for his Childs): but the want of Parents Faith, ought not with the Church to prejudice, in this caſe, the Children of ſuch Parents.

But a more manifeſt prevarication ſcarce can be, than what he delivers as to the *Viſitation of the ſick*. Pag. 167. *When they are ſick*, ſays he, *if they will but ſay they repent, and deſire it, they muſt be abſolved in abſolute terms; though they give the Miniſter no ſatisfaction that they are truly Penitent, and have lived till then, a moſt ungodly life, and perhaps by curſing,*

curſing, ſwearing and railing at an holy Life on their Sick-bed. It is plain by the Office of the Viſitation of the Sick, that much in that Particular is referred to the diſcretion of the Miniſter: Then ſhall the Miniſter exhort the ſick perſon, after this form, or other like, ſays the Rubrick: He is not then tied up, but may vary; and I ſcarce ever knew, but, in ordinary practice, we do ſo. Again, Then ſhall the Miniſter examine whether he repent him truly of his ſins, and be in Charity with all the World; exhorting him, &c. *viz.* to *forgiveneſs, ſatisfaction* to men for wrongs done, *diſpoſal of his goods, Charity* to the Poor, all which, ſays the Rubrick, may be done, before the Miniſter begin his Prayer, as he ſhall ſee cauſe. And for all this there is no form at all preſcribed: conſequently then, it being left to the Miniſters prudence, he he may put what Interrogatories, and make as narrow a ſearch, as he ſhall think fit, and he is required plainly to *judge*, becauſe to exhort and admoniſh, as there appears cauſe. Now it is to be conſidered, theſe Exhortations and Admonitions may, and moſt frequently do, take up divers Viſits: However, all this being ſuppoſed to be done, *Then* (and not till then) Here ſhall the ſick perſon be moved to make a ſpecial Confeſſion of his ſins, if he feel his Conſcience burdened with any weighty matter. After which Confeſſion the Prieſt ſhall abſolve him (if he humbly and heartily deſire it) after this ſort. *Rubr.* Where, to be ſhort, I only deſire two things may be noted.

1. That after all this, the Miniſter is not commanded to abſolve him [*They muſt be abſolved*, in Mr. *Baxter*, is then falſe.] but if he ſee fit to abſolve him, he is to abſolve him after this ſort. It is very well known, di-

divers of us have refused, and daily do, to absolve such persons, touching whose Penitence we are not satisfied.

2. Those words, **if he humbly and heartily desire it**, do import the discovery of such a sense of sin to to the Confessour (at least suppose him in Conscience judge) as may well be conceived to bear him out in giving Absolution; certainly, they do exclude *Cursing and Swearing, and railing at an holy Life at that time.* Which things being so apparently thus, it would almost tempt a man in charity to think, Mr. *Baxter* writes against the *Liturgy*, without having duly read or considered it; otherwise he would not so falsly accuse it, or traduce our Church for it. His last imputation is but little better than this which we have now dispatched; Namely, that the *Discipline of the Church is managed by one Lay Chancellor and his Court, with some small Assistance.* The *Archdeacons* (of which in most Dioceses there are divers, in that of *Exon*, from whence I came, four) throughout *England* generally have their Courts; and neither are they Lay-men, nor for the most part do they Act mainly by Lay-Officials; and their Courts in many places are weekly: Besides these, in Every *Deanery* (*i.e.* ten Parishes, or thereabouts) there are *Archypresbyters* or *Deans Rural*, whose Duty and Oath binds them to enquire into the Conversation, as well of the Clergy, as of the People, within their Precincts. So that if Ministers and Churchwardens will but do their Duty, the Provision of Discipline is sufficient (in Mr. *Baxter's* language) for the *keeping clean the Church.* I will be still so charitable to him, as to believe, he is not verst in our Exercise of Discipline; but I could also have wish't, that,

that he had no more cenſured it: Only I will conclude this Particular by appealing to his own Senſe, and the ſenſe of Mankind, if ſuch undue and prevaricant Charges, as theſe, be *the way to peace.*

9. And now I am ſpeaking of Prevarication, his reckoning *Hooper*, *Latimer*, and *Cranmer*, *pag.* 228. amongſt the Nonconformiſts, to conciliate thence credit to their Cauſe, and detract from us, is a kind of Art, which Ingenuity, and much more Chriſtian Veracity, would bluſh to own: I will allude in this regard to the words of the *great Apoſtle*, I wiſh not only Mr. *Baxter*, but all the *Diſſenters*, were altogether ſuch as they, excepting their Bonds and Sufferings.

10ly, and Laſtly, (For, I will not run the number up to Mr. *Baxter*'s beloved number of 20, or upwards, though I might) There appears to me in him a great Inconſtancy to himſelf; and that not only in ſmaller points and lapſes of memory or attention (as may ſeem that, *pag.* 10. *I never came near them*, [that is, the People of *Kidderminſter*] *nor, except very rarely, ſent them one line*; yet within five lines after, *I ſent them*, ſays he, *all the Books which I wrote*;) but even in his Reſolutions and Matters of great moment, is there with him *Yea* and *Nay*? Sometimes he ſeems againſt all *Subſcribing*, as *pag.* 60, 113, *&c.* At another time, he is for Subſcribing to the Doctrine of the Church in the 39 Articles and Books of Homilies, (*pag.* 12, 167, *&c.*) and other terms of Peaceableneſs. Again, *pag.* 128. The 39 *Articles are a wholſome Doctrine*; yet *pag.* 122. *They are not intelligible, they have contrary meanings to fit the uſe of every Subſcriber*; *they are hot to one, and cold to the other.* [By the way, ſometimes it is no fault in

the Books to be ſubſcribed, that they are ſo worded as to allow men to abound in their own ſenſe: And we are ſure our Articles are in this no more guilty, than moſt Confeſſions, which have been penn'd for Concord, as the *Auguſtan* it ſelf, witneſs therein the Article and Clauſe touching the Preſence of Chriſt's Body in the Sacrament. In ſum, when a Propoſition evidently admits of two or three ſenſes, and each of them is known, famous, and held by divers Doctors of the ſame Church, and that Church framing a Rule or Mean of Concord for her Sons, ſhall in that Rule ſet a Propoſition which takes in the ſeveral Opinions of theſe Doctors, in ſuch ſort, as to tye them up, as far as is neceſſary, and to leave them otherwiſe at their liberty, is this Propoſition juſtly to be called unintelligible, or have Mr. *Baxter* and the Diſſenters any cauſe, if they will be conſtant to themſelves, to ſay 'tis Unreaſonable? For my own part, I wiſh ſincerely, for their ſakes, ſome more of the Articles, and perhaps Rubricks too, were penned with ampler Latitude.] But to the Point again: That is a very unkind inconſtancy (unkind not only to us, but to the Deſign of Peace) that ſo often in *pag.* 16, 17, 18, &c. he ſays, *They take it to be their Duty, in the Exerciſe of their Miniſtry, to take heed of any thing that tendeth to the Diviſion of the peoples minds, or the hinderance of the lawful publick Miniſtry, or to their juſt Diſcouragement;*——Again, *to take heed leſt any diſhonour, or murmuring againſt their Rulers, ariſe or be cheriſhed by reaſon of their ſufferings;*—— or, *to ſubvert or perplex the hearers by aggravating the faults of others, or other mens worſhipping of God, or breeding in them diſtaſt of the Publick Worſhip:* (for all which Expreſſions I could not but inwardly thank

thank and love him.) And again, that after he had ſaid, *pag.* 143. *We take Conformity to be ſo far from indifferent, that we forbear to tell the World the greatneſs of the ſin, leſt men cannot bear it, and leſt it ſhould diſaffect the People to the Miniſtry of the Conformiſts*; That, I ſay, after all this ſo fairly profeſt and promiſed, he ſhould ſpend three or four whole Pages continuedly (beſides what he does interſperſt) in a moſt unjuſt aggravating what he calls the ſinfulneſs of Conformity, ſtyling *Conformity*, in their ſenſe and eſtimation of it, *Aggravate Perjury, Deliberate Lying, Rebellious Profeſſion of Diſobedience to God, owning great and publick ſins, corrupting holy Worſhip*, and to all theſe (when his wearied invention ſupplied him with no more hateful terms of variation) adding after his manner, an *&c. pag.* 219. Again, ſays he on the ſame Subject, *The ſins we fear being guilty of* (namely by Conformity) *are as great as almoſt any we ſhall ever preach againſt.*------ *We fear we ſhall do much to make our hearers infidel, impenitent, and utterly debauch't.* Pag. 220. Yet higher: *The ſins which we fear* (ſtill by this dreadful Bugbear, Conformity) *being of the greateſt ſort Hell ſuggeſteth, Perjury and owning the Perjury of thouſands, and doing what is equipollent to the preaching Impenitence, and ſaying, Repent not, making a publick Miniſterial Profeſſion of Uſurpation and Church Corruption, and of our Reſolution never to obey God in doing any Duty of ours in order to Reformation* (pag. 221.) *Offering God lying Perjury, &c. for a Sacrifice, and ſo blaſpheming him*; pag. 222. If Mr. *Baxter* have theſe fears, certainly he would have done very well to have kept his word, and *forborn telling the world of them*, except he would

The very ſame ſtrain, and almoſt word, he has again, pag. 218 and 219. and I know not indeed how often.

have all the Conformable Miniſtry ſilenced (which would be fiveſold the objected 2000) or which is worſe, except he deſigned by this publication of his fears not only *the hinderance*, but the blaſting for ever *their Miniſtry, both Publick and Private.* O the ſtrange Partiality and Irreſolution that is in Man! To *lead, draw*, or *encourage thouſands into Arms* againſt their Soveraign, contrary to a man's own, and all their Oaths of Allegiance, as well as contrary to the Laws of God and Man, when ſome men *ſearch their hearts* they cannot find to be Perjury, nor owning Perjury: Nay, *they cannot ſee in ſo doing they were miſtaken in the Cauſe, nor dare repent of it, nor forbear doing the ſame, if it were to be done again, in the ſame ſtate of things:* nay, they *cannot be convinced* by others *that they ſinned in this matter:* (Holy Commonw. pag. 486.) Yet to Subſcribe and declare, That it is not lawful, upon any pretence whatſoever, to take Arms againſt the King, or that an unlawful Oath cannot bind men to unlawful Actions is *Perjury*, ſome of the groſſeſt that *Hell ſuggeſteth.* I temper my ſelf. Good Lord deliver mens Conſciences from theſe deluſive Snares, and make us conſtant to thee and our ſelves! Without even this latter, as well as former, no poſſibility of Peace. I break off my Inſtances here, not for want of many more, but becauſe I promiſed ſo; and becauſe I conceive I have ſaid enough to demonſtrate to Mr. *Baxter*, and all the World, what I am content to call the *firſt Defect* in his *Writings for Peace*; they want, as I may call it, the Stamp or Character of Peace, they ſeem not writ with a Peaceable Temper.

The

The ſecond Defect I ſhall tax, in his Writings on this Subject, is in part grounded on the former; and it is, *want* of that *Credit* and *Authority*, even with good men, which he might eaſily conciliate, at leaſt might have eaſily conciliated to his Writings, would he avoid, or had he avoided, what he muſt needs acknowledge to be as real blemiſhes, as perhaps any can be aſſigned: If he would put leſs Gall in his Ink, if he would write with more Gentleneſs, Softneſs, Compliance and Yielding, as far as in Conſcience he can, his Books would take and perſwade a thouſand times more. It is a Rule which he himſelf preſſes, and which I remember my ſelf firſt to have read in his *Gildas Silvianus* four and twenty years ago, *Dilige & dic quod voles:* I do not prevaricate, if I ſay, 'tis not the tenth part of our men, which are Readers, that will read his Books on theſe Subjects, by reaſon of theſe his Severities: His Fierceneſs blaſts the good he might do. But *this* I have ſaid enough of already, as alſo of his *inconſtancy to himſelf*. There are two other Points, which, out of the Faithfulneſs I promiſed, I muſt not paſs unobſerved; And the firſt of them is (to give it the fitteſt name) The *never acknowledging an Errour*, eſpecially, where it cannot well be, but he muſt be convinc't of it: I have read ſomewhere, that when *Luther* lay on his Death-bed (or towards his end) he confeſt to *Melanchthon*, that he had writ too violently, and more than to him then ſeemed truth, in the Controverſie of the *Sacrament*, and the Preſence of *Chriſt's Body* therein. *Melanchthon* perſwaded him to ſomething of a *Retractation*; *No*, ſays *Luther*, *ſhould I retract any thing I have written, the Papiſts will ſay I retracted all, and ſo nothing I have written may be credited:* I cannot tell whe-

whether Mr. *Baxter* may not have ſomething of this vein; but I think his Caſe and *Luther's* widely different. In a word, it would redound to his immortal credit, would he publickly revoke and recant thoſe things, which, in his Conſcience, he judges he has writ amiſs in *juſtification of the late Wars*, and the *alterations of Government* that inſued thereon: Diverſe Paſſages of this nature I could tranſcribe out of Notes from that unhappy and miſcalled Book, his *Holy Commonwealth*: But there is more collected and copied out of it in the Biſhop of *Worceſter's* Letter, and ſome other ſharper Pieces againſt him, than I could wiſh for his ſake were extant. I remember my ſelf to have read about the year 1663. in ſome *Preface* or *Epiſtle* before his *Call to the Unconverted*, that he himſelf takes notice of this prejudice lying againſt him and his Writings, (the Book I have not by me) and that he there profeſſes to this purpoſe, *That, did he either know of any Seditious or Treaſonable Matters which he had any where delivered or maintained, or would any ſhew him of ſuch, he would immediately retract them.* He and I, and all the World, except men of evil Principles, or no Principles, muſt ſay, There is a great deal of Miſchievous and Seditious Politicks (not to call a *Spade a Spade*) in the Book mentioned: Nor will I be ſo unkind to him, I ſay, as that any more of it ſhall be by me recorded againſt him. But I intreat him not to reſent it as written out of ill will, if I tell him, many do (I aſſure him I do not) believe he is of the ſame Principles ſtill, becauſe he is ſo far from having retracted, or made ſatisfaction for the Scandal of that Book (as far as is generally known) that in the Paſſage above-cited, even after all theſe things were pardoned by the King, he ſays,

If

If he had writ any such thing, he would have retracted: which seems to the World an Argument, he did not look upon that Book, which yet goes under his name, as containing in it any Treasonable or Seditious Matter: To which, that I may be still faithful, I must add; That his going about to maintain such Paradoxes, as some before taxed, touching the beginning of the *War*, &c. confirm mens jealousies, and encrease their admiration and prejudice in this regard: He would not have us to rub on these sores; let him be prevail'd with, not to tempt such thereto, by strange defiances, who perhaps want temper to resist so daring Provocations.

Another real Blemish (to use again my former terms) and which Mr. *Baxter* must needs acknowledge such, if he acknowledges any Blemishes incident to his Works, is, his assuming so much unto himself, and looking, if not upon all men as below him, yet upon all, that will not learn of him, as *young, raw, unskilful,* without *experience*, sometimes too without *conscience* and *sense of spiritual things.* Verily I have divers times pitied him, when I have read the Contempt he has in ordinary course expresst of men, who have studied, if not quite as long, yet, according to the Opinion and Suffrage of the Learned World, more legitimately, and to much better purpose, than himself: Such a person I take the Authour of the *Friendly Debate* to be, if I mistake not (as I think I do not) the man; whom Mr. *Baxter* scornfully has nam'd the *Debate Maker* (we know what kind of men, that term in one sense, belongs to) but is a man known above twenty years ago, to have had more Learning of all sorts, than it appears to me Mr. *Baxter* has of any; and who has given the World

proof

proof of no leſs Piety and Integrity; yet what a Child and Novice does Mr. *Baxter* make of him, *pag.* 116. However, this we will eaſily excuſe, as a Cenſure only upon a ſingle Adverſary. That I do not know how to Apologize for, which according to Information (for I have not my ſelf ſeen the Book) he has in his *Firſt Part of the Plea for Peace*, (*p.* 172. *N.* 12.) animadverting upon the firſt *Rubrick* after the Office of Publick Baptiſm, touching the Salvation of Baptized Infants, who dye before Actual Sin; *When*, ſays he, *young unſtudied men have in this Point attained to an undoubted certainty which their wiſer Seniors cannot attain, it behoveth them to convince us of the truth of their Inſpiration or ſpecial Indowments, either by a proportionable excellency above us in other things, or by ſome Miracles or Teſtimonies from Heaven.* It is not eaſie *for young unſtudied men* to get into the *Houſe of Convocation* (by whom this Rubrick was approved, if not framed) but that the *Repreſentative Body of the Engliſh Clergy* (a ſmall part whereof have, before Mr. *Baxter's* time, been look't upon and pronounced *the Admiration of the World*) ſhould by a ſingle perſon, whoſe own * Education was very defective, be ſtyled ſuch, and himſelf too plainly enough profeſs himſelf amongſt their *Wiſer Seniors*, beſpeaks ſuch a Confidence, which I will not give a name to. Other Paſſages, which are pertinent to this place alſo, I have had occaſion otherwiſe to mention out of his *Third Part* already. ——— *Nec bis repetita placebunt*: Yet perhaps there is one following, exceeds all: *Methodus Theologiæ Chriſtianæ*, 1. *Naturæ rerum*, 2. *Sacræ Scripturæ*, 3. *Praxi Congrua*, *conformis adaptata*, *Plerumque* (*corrigenda tamen & perficienda*)

A polog. pag. 58, 59.

Non

Non 1. *Ignavis, festinantibus, delassatis.* 2. *Stolidis, Indocilibus, Sectariis* (*ex homine & fuco judicantibus.*) 3. *Superbis, mundanis, maligais: Ergo, non plurimis, Sed Juventutis Academicæ & Pastorum junior*um *parti,* 1 *Studiosæ, sedulæ, indefessæ.* 2. *Ingeniosæ, Docili, veritatem & ordinem sitienti.* 3. *Humili, Candidæ, Deo devotæ. Quippe ad* 1. *Veritatis indagationem, custodiam, propagationem.* 2. *Sanctitatis Cultum, incrementum, Laudem.* 3. *Ecclesiæ salutem, pacem, Decus. Supra omnes natæ, dispositæ, consecratæ: Dicata per Richardum Baxterum Philotheologum.* (And after follows a Sentence out of *Cicer. pro Roscio*, almost as humbly affixt) When I first read this Title in the Term-Catalogues, I thought it some Character or Summary of the Contents of the Book, which the Stationer had procured, there inserted to recommend the Book to better Sale: but having since got the Book, I find it is the Genuin Title given it by the Authour himself, and as much his own, for ought appears, as the rest of the Book; and, in truth, it has the peculiar signature of his way of writing. Does he, or any man in the World, think it is a fit invitation or preparatory to a man to read a Book with patience, and without prejudice, that the Book in its front, indirectly and slily, calls him *Slothful, rash, foolish, unteachable, proud, worldly, malign, &c.* If not this affront, yet the other indiscretion of so voluminous and *imboss't* a *Title* (as one phrases such) certainly will deter most Readers,

Quid ferat hic tanto dignum promissor hiatu?

a Rule, which, if he had *had his School Books* so much about him, as he would possess us, had done

him much more ſervice, than all the fetches in by the head and ſhoulders out of *Juvenal* (*Third Part of Plea for Peace, pag.* 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 206, 209.) with as much ornament as pertinence.

Purpureus latè qui ſplendeat unus & alter
Aſſuitur pannus. ——— *Sed citharœdus*
Ridetur, chordâ qui ſemper oberrat eâdem.

But to return from this Infection of repeating old ends, though never ſo appoſite; Could any thing eaſily be ſaid with more (appearance of) *Arrogance*, in the very Title Page too, than that his Book is *above all others of the ſame Subject* (I know not how otherwiſe to interpret his *Supra omnes* [viz. *Methodus Theologiæ Chriſtianæ*] *&c.*) framed, diſpoſed and hallowed amongſt other ends to the *Propagation and growth of Holineſs*, to the *Peace and Honour of the Church*? I will now for ever joyn with Mr. *Baxter* in acquitting him of a fault, which he ſaith *he dares not be guilty of*, ſtyled by himſelf *Hypocritical Modeſty*. (*Third Part of Plea: pag.* 247.)

Theſe are the chief Blots I have obſerved in Mr. *Baxters* Works, which render them ſo much unſerviceable to the Deſign of Peace: He writes ſo *peeviſhly*, ſo *variouſly* or inconſtantly to himſelf, ſo *blindly* (as if wilfully blind, or not *penitent*) of his own guilt, and ſo *arrogantly* and *diſdainfully*, that many are diſcouraged from reading his Books, others only take thence further pet; though I faithfully promiſe to do neither.

Laſtly, Were his pacificatory Writings obnoxious by none of the afore-recited defects or inconveniences, yet the Materials, in my poor judgment, are very

ry defective, and (without very considerable advances) never like to take. I no whit at all doubt but Mr. *Baxter* was the main Authour of the *Petition for Peace*, and the *Reformation of the Liturgy*, said to have been tender'd about the same time, and publisht *A.D.* 1661. The style and whole tenor of them abundantly bespeaks so much to me: Now, if out of these, and his later Pieces, we view what he offers or proposes towards Union, it will appear to be such as might tempt men to think, he treats like those who never intend to come nearer to an agreement. 1. A Liturgy indeed he would possess us he is for; but when he comes to particularize, Not one Office, no, not one Prayer of the Old Liturgy (except the Lords Prayer) nor so much as the Ancient Face, Order and Structure thereof must be left. And it is observeable, what the Petition for Peace styles Alterations and Additions to the Liturgy, when it comes to be presented, is intitled *A Reformation of the Liturgy* (and indeed bears proportion perfectly to the Reformation they made of the Church, which destroy'd its identity and visibility) and is clearly and intirely a new Frame, and even that so proposed, or designed, that it would have been little more than a Direction; this being generally the style of the Rubricks (if without offence I may so call them) [Prayer] *to be performed in these, or the like words*, pag. 25. *Then shall the Minister use this or the like Prayer*, pag. 51. In the very Office of Consecration of the Elements in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, *Let the Minister bless them in these, or the like words*, pag. 52. *Let the Minister pray thus, or to this sense*, pag. 56. *and conclude with this or the like blessing*, pag. 58. In the Burial of the Dead, pag. 72. *His power shall be suited*

to the occasion: No Form of Prayer being there so much as directed. So too upon Days of Publick Humiliation, Thanksgiving, Anniversary Festivals, No form at all, *pag.* 73. Besides so great variety of practice, in the Order of Consecrating and Distributing the Elements, is permitted in this Draught to the Discretion of the Minister, as must necessarily have bred great disorder and discontent: In a word, so universal innovation, and such unlimited liberty, they could never expect would be admitted. This had been to confess the old Liturgy obnoxious beyond all reason and conscience; and our selves guilty of all the Mischiefs which arose by the opposing it, and by the methods used for the abolishing it. I no whit doubt but divers parts of it (as elsewhere I conceive my self to have manifestly proved) were in use even in the Apostles days, I mean, taken up from their mouths, as having been frequently, and in ordinary course used by them, and that they have been continued in the Church ever since: Now Prayers of such Antiquity, such Primitive simplicity and fervour, I may add of such Purity too, were it not for no other reason, but some mens (perhaps unreasonable) dislikes to be thrown out: I could speak much here touching their intrinsick real excellency and perfection, not only as to particulars, but as to the main body: And I find something, as to this Point, confest ingenuously by Mr. *Baxter* himself, *Third Part of Plea*, pag. 9. *Having*, saith he, *perused all the Forreign and Ancient Liturgies extant in the* Bibliotheca Patrum, *I doubt not but our own is incomparably better than any that is there.* Yet, *pag.* 219. he complains of *such failings in it*, that it is *a Worship which we* (*i.e.* he and his Nonconforming Brethren) *cannot in Faith be assured God acceptеth.* That

That there was never any thing purely of Humane Compoſure, but had ſome failing or defects in it, we readily acknowledge: neither did our Church ever require (whatſoever he in the Page laſt cited, and other of his Party ſcrupulouſly pretend) ſuch a Subſcription to any of her Books (no not to the Correcteſt Tranſlation of the Bible it ſelf) which was to be taken in any other ſenſe. This is a common Temper underſtood in all ſuch Subſcriptions: But that our Liturgy has more failings or faults in it, than either their Extemporary Conceptions, or the ſtated Forms, which they preſented, I muſt crave their pardon if I peremptorily deny: I have, not undiligently, compared thoſe Forms of theirs with our own; and whether it be the daily uſe of our own for many years (according to that wholſome Rubrick to all in Holy Orders) which has naturalized them to my ſpirit, or whether by ſo frequent reading, hearing and minding them, I ſee more intimately into their Senſe and Emphaſes, than I do into thoſe which I have read but twice or thrice, or for ſome ſuch reaſon, I know not, but this I profeſs, God bearing me witneſs, that it is the ſenſe of my ſoul, I can find nothing in theirs which comes ſo naturally near unto my heart, as our own Prayers do. What have they ſo humble, eaſie, comprehenſive and emphatical in every part, as our *General Confeſſion*, Almighty and moſt merciful Father? So Pathetical as well as comprehenſive alſo as our *Litany*? And to paſs over other parts, the *Communion Service* is in my poor ſenſe of Devotions, moſt incomparable: What could the Wit of Men or Angels deviſe fitter to introduce the Celebration of that Holy Ordinance, than the *diſtinct Rehearſal* of the *Commandments*, each Communicant, in the hearing

of

of every Commandment, having occaſion given him to examine, or reflect upon his examinations of Conſcience, touching his ſins againſt that Commandment, and, betwixt God and his own heart, in his thoughts to confeſs them; and in concluſion, after every one with his own mouth to beg diſtinct pardon for the ſins, which occur to his mind againſt that Commandment, and for Grace, as diſtinctly, againſt ſuch and ſuch ſins for the future: And all this uſher'd in too with a Prayer, which would raiſe any Soul that were not ſenſleſs, as well to a ſtrict enquiry into his Conſcience, [Almighty God, to whom all hearts be open, &c. 'tis in vain therefore to flatter our ſelves with an half-ſcrutiny or Confeſſion] as to the impartial cleanſing his Soul from all reſerves of ſin. And (waving other parts) to proceed to the Prayer for the State of *Chriſts Church Militant*, and the *Commemoration* of, and *praiſing God* for *the Triumphant*, or thoſe who are departed this life in his faith and fear; (without which commemoration it appears not that the Ancient Church did ever Communicate) To proceed, I ſay, to the *General Confeſſion* in behalf of all the Communicants, and that moſt comfortable *Abſolution* annext, and then to the *Surſum Corda*, the Τρισάγιον, the *Gloria in Excelſis* (which three laſt will certainly reach home, for Antiquity, to the Apoſtles days) what more Seraphick than theſe? And how mean is, what they would have ſubſtituted in the room hereof, at leaſt comparatively? Again, beſides the Materials of our Prayers, the very Form and Expreſſion is admirable, and infinitely above that they would have obtruded. It is not every kind of ſtyle, or Character of Speech, which is fit for Publick Prayers; There is ſomething in this reſpect,

Quod nequeo monſtrare, at ſentio tantùm,

not

not so well expressible to all mens Apprehension, which makes those Prayers of theirs more non-natural. More expresly; such Heterogenous Pieces, such bold Narrative or telling God of divers Matters, such abruptness of Transitions, such confused synonymous Petitions, such long-winded Continuations, without any Responds at all (which yet I have heard Mr. *Baxter* has declared his Approbation of) yea, without any obliging the People so much as to a *Vocal Amen* (the frequent use whereof, as it is very ancient, so must I commend as most serviceable to engage the Peoples hearts ever and anon afresh in Prayer, and to keep them to the Publick Devotions) these, I say, and divers more very uncouth Incidents concurring in them, render them very unsavoury to us in comparison of our own; and as unmeet to be received, much more to be prescribed. Wherefore I wonder not that their whole frame was rejected; but I must confess I do wonder at the Humoursomness of their Authours Devotion, who ever thought of rejecting all ours, or admitting theirs into equal Authority, so that it should have been at the Ministers choice which to have used? Would they have had us had two Liturgies, or to have received one which had litrle to recommend it but utter Novelty, and to have laid aside another, whose Antiquity, Simplicity, Purity and Perfection has extorted Commendations from its very Adversaries? These things they could not expect would be agreed unto, nor may yet: wherefore such Terms of Peace or Accommodation they ought not to think of. Thus as to what Mr. *Baxter*, and some of his Brethren have proposed touching the *Liturgy*.

2. As

2. As to the Ceremonies, as far as I can see, Mr. *Baxter* would have therein only such a Reformation, which

——— *Una litura poteſt.*

Take all away, and the Quarrel is at an end, we are all one, pag. 218. Sometimes indeed he ſpeaks, as if he would have theſe left to all mens choice, ſo that they *who have a mind of them, might uſe them*, and they who have not, might let them alone; as *pag.* 60, 113. *&c.* But this (eſpecially if extended to all) would be of far worſe Conſequence than the preſent Injunction can be juſtly charged with.

3. Epiſcopacy he expreſſes ſometimes a content to ſubmit to; yet at other times, both brings ſuch Charges againſt it, and makes ſuch Demands, as at once deſtroy the order, and all regard to be paid to it. *Uſurpation and Church Corruption* are ordinary terms for it; *pag.* 218, 221, *&c.* (He has much * worſe, but I cannot ſtay to look them). And he demands, That *an Univerſal Confirmation be granted of thoſe who have been ordained otherwiſe than by Biſhops, they being ſtill reſponſible for any perſonal Inſufficiency or Crime, and that Reordination, whether Abſolute or Hypothetical, be not made neceſſary to the Exerciſe of their* (that is, ſuch mens) *Miniſtry.* Petition for Peace, pag. 2. Take away from the Biſhop this Peculiar, and farewel Epiſcopacy, St. *Hierom* himſelf being Judge. *Quid enim facit, exceptâ Ordinatione, Epiſcopus, quod Presbyter non facit?* Epiſt. ad Euagr. This for that reaſon was not to be expected, becauſe inconſiſtent with retaining the Order: Beſides, that in the judgment of the generality of the Church of *England*, ſuch practice can never be admitted in our own Church (I profeſs I meddle not

* Church Tyranny, p. 241. Deſtroying thouſand of Churches. p. 243. &c.

not with Forreigners) without Schism and abominable Scandal; even the Laity would be no less scandalized at it, than the Clergy.

4. Another strange Demand or Proposal of Mr. *Baxter's*, and divers of his Brethrens, is, that the *Exercise of Discipline*, even to *to the putting each scandalous Offender to open Penance*, and in case such person submit not after Admonitions, the *Power of Excommunication* should be vested in every single Parochial Minister: *provided* indeed *there be place for due Appeals to Superiour Powers*. Reform. of Liturg. pag. 79, 80, 87, 88. *&c.* Yet is it not determined there, what Crimes they are which are scandalous, but rather tacitly supposed that all men know them, or that every Minister will judge aright. How far the very Parliament themselves were from permitting this to the Parochial Presbyteries, and what Debates there were upon this single Point, *what should be a scandalous sin*, or a cause sufficient to have men *suspended from the Lord's Supper*, I list not to speak at present: Yet then it was demanded only for the Pastor and Eldership, now to the Pastor singly: This Demand at once cuts off from the Bishops the taking cognizance of any scandalous Offence *in primâ instantiâ*, as we speak: Before their Power of Ordination had its wound, now their *Jurisdiction*; Yet we must suppose them Bishops still. However let it be consider'd whether this Proposal would have been swallowed, in case it had past the Bishops, by either People or Parliament: A few Ecclesiastical Courts in a Diocese, that is in some hundreds of Parishes, though all of them govern'd by Canons, which the Ecclesiastical Judge dare not swerve from, are now looked upon by a great many as a strange burthen; Would then the People

ever submit to, or our Lawgivers go about to Erect and Authorize, a severer Tribunal, regulated chiefly by a single persons discretion in every Parish? What intolerable Confusion, Strife or Oppression must arise from hence? I can think of none that this project would be good for, unless the Officers in the Bishops Courts; for they undoubtedly would have so much work by Appeals, that they would not be able to turn themselves to it. If any say this last Head is no defect, but rather an exorbitancy; I answer, as to the Discipline propounded, there is a defect of Laws and Canons: but, to give an answer once for all, which may serve too in other cases, whether Mr. *Baxter's* Proposals in general are peccant in *Defect* or *Excess* of what is fit, I am not concern'd to be Critical: I modestly styled them defects, and I am sure they come much short of being any likely Mean of Peace. Witness,

5. That he divers times insinuates more a great deal would be done by himself and brethren towards Conformity, were not *Subscriptions*, *Declarations*, *Swearing and Penalties imposed:* and so seems to desire Conformity only might be injoyn'd, but none of these stipulations or obligations thereto required: Thus, *Third Part of Plea.* pag. 60. *Let the* Agenda *of Religion remain only* Agenda, *and the doing of them serve the turn, and you would have much fewer Scruplers and Nonconformists.* And to the same purpose again (for he seems to think us very forgetful) *pag.* 113, 156. *&c.* First, as to the point of bare Church-Conformity, there is only required *Subscription* and *Declaration.* The Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy are of another consideration, and I suppose not excepted against; And the Oath of *Canonical Obe-*

Obedience (which binding expresly only *In licitis & honestis*, I wonder men make such a clamour of) and the *Oath against Simony* are administred only to such who are instituted into Livings: So that upon the whole a man would think the business of Swearing should never hinder any Loyal Subject from Conformity, being that Swearing properly so called is not required to Conformity. And then, Secondly, as to *Subscribing* and *Declaring*, those who pretend, they more scruple these, than they do the performing the things they thereby engage to, would either without them perform those things (that is, observe the Liturgy and Ceremonies) constantly, or only when they saw fit, and as they pleased. If the Later, this would be much worse than plain Nonconformity.

——*Magis ingenuè Peribomius.*——

If the former, when they shall have proved that it is much more to declare a thing lawful, and promise either to do it, or submit to the Penalty for not doing it, than it is without any such promise ordinarily to practice it; when, I say, they shall have proved this, by any consent, they shall be accounted Conformists upon such practice without any Subscription or Declaration: Nay, further I dare engage, let any of them come into our Churches, put on the Surplice, read Prayers orderly, go up and Preach, they shall have leave so to do, though they never Subscribe or Declare; and for their so doing they shall suffer no Penalty: And till they will prove the one, or do the other, I must conceive Subscribing and Declaring is reasonable: For seeing they have to do these things, how shall we know they will do them, except they

tell us so beforehand, and that's Declaring; or else write so, and that's *Subscribing*. This abatement therefore was not to be expected, and so not to be proposed.

6. I add hereto, Mr. *Baxter* does not propound to do, what yet he says he can in Conscience do, and what he judges lawful; no, neither does he or his Brethren ordinarily practice so much, as far as I can hear. 1. He very honestly tells us (*pag.* 8, 9.) he can Communicate *with our Parish Churches in the Churches Prayers, and hear the Ministers where he lives, if they be but tolerable in the Sacred Office.* Nay, he is *exceedingly moved against the Separation*, as well by the *Arguments of many of the famous old Nonconformists*, as by *four* excellent *Considerations* he there subjoins. 2. It appears by what he discourses at large from *pag.* 14. to 20. and *pag.* 139. *sub fin.* 240. and in divers other places, that he does not at all judge it unlawful, but many times very expedient to forbear their preaching in the time of the Publick Prayers and Sermons of the Church, on Lords days: Whether these two be his and their practice, we leave it to themselves, we hope it is; only I do not find he propounds to do this, as a Mean of Peace. 3. He says, *he himself never scrupled Kneeling at the receiving the Lords Supper.* pag. 155. 4. I have heard also that in his *Five Disputations*, *pag.* 409. he hath these words, (speaking upon a Supposal that one certain habit were enjoyned Ministers in their Ministration) *The thing in it self being therefore lawful, I would obey him* [*i. e.* The Magistrate] *and use that Garment if I could not be dispensed with; yea, though secondarily the Whiteness be to signifie Purity, and so it be made a Teaching*

ing Sign, yet would I obey. Now it would appear hence, that he does not think the Surplice unlawful: Yet do I not expect, he ſhould propound either of theſe two laſt in general (whatever himſelf in particular might think good to do for reconciling himſelf to our Church) becauſe he intimates *Better men than himſelf ſcruple them.* However, this very matter I may juſtly mention as the

Seventh and Laſt Defect I will take notice of, in his Propoſals, that we can build upon little or nothing in them, as Concluſive to the Body of the Diſſenters; Becauſe *What are his thoughts to Two thouſand that are Abſent*, or not conſulted: *Third Part of Plea: pag.* 195.

I have thus dealt very faithfully with Mr. *Baxter* and his Writings, as to the matter of Peace: and I hope he will approve himſelf ſo wiſe and good a man as not to take with the left, what is given him with the right hand; but if he think fit to write more on this Subject, that he will ſtudy rather the cloſing Wounds, than making or widening them: He complains himſelf, he has had but bad ſucceſs in ſolliciting the Cauſe of Peace: I will therefore adventure to take my leave of him, in recommending to him what I am of the mind he may do to much better purpoſe, and what, were I in his Circumſtances, I ſhould, if not judge my ſelf bound unto, yet accept as the beſt Works, with which I could cloſe my Labours.

Firſt, Whereas he intimates (*pag.* 71.) that he has wrote above *Seventy Books, wherein his Doctrine and Religion are viſible*; were I their Author, leſt People ſhould take all that to be my Doctrine and Religion, which is viſible in them, I would immediate-

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ly with what care I could run them over, and conſcientiouſly retract (either under ſome general heads, or in particular, as the caſe and my leiſure would permit) whatever I ſhould judge had been ſaid amiſs or leſs ſound. Mr. *Baxter* well knows how great a mans Works, in the Uſual Editions, begin with his Books of *Retractations* and *Confeſſions*.

Secondly, Whereas it is apparent, Mr. *Baxter* has been intangled miſerably in the Calamities of the times, and perhaps contracted thence ſuch Circumſtances, as render it highly unexpedient for him, as he conceives, to ſpeak in his preſent Condition, as he would or might have done, if never ſo intangled; I would, were I as he, at leaſt in conceipt diſembaraſs my ſelf, and ſit down, and conſidering the preſent ſtate of the Church, what is impoſed, what are the pretences of thoſe who oppoſe, what a fair Gaim theſe oppoſitions put into the hands of the Common Enemy; conſidering, I ſay, and comprehending, as near as I could, the whole, I would freely preſent to the World my calm and unintereſſed thoughts, and give a candid and impartial Account, what I could in Conſcience do, and what in prudence I would do, were I to begin the World again, in order to the fair and ſucceſsful Exerciſe of any Miniſtry. I humbly beg his pardon, if I think, he never can do the Chriſtian Church and himſelf a greater Service than two ſuch Works of theſe would amount to: and ſo from my heart I commend him to the Grace of God.

I ſhould now reflect on ſome others upon the ſame Subject: and I am ſorry that I can truly ſay, I have met with ſome, who taking up Mr. *Baxter*'s Principles, out-going him, acting only like thoſe *who caſt*

abroad

abroad Firebrands and Arrows and Death. I will not name them, nor their Books; for neither does it conduce to Peace: No more will I take notice of some Insignificants, one of whom, in his Title Page, has inserted *Celeuseuca* as a Book of a Pacificatory Design (so is the Father of Lies a Peacemaker) It would seem that Author was as well verst in the Contents of the Book he Commends, as in the import of its Title *Celeusuca.*

But I am very weary of these People, and will therefore, that I may not be wanting to my Design, pass over to such who seem to me to run on the *contrary Extream.*

Such are they that would have nothing at all yielded on our side: And these, as far as I have met with, I may reduce to two sorts (at least their vein of Writing, let their Professions be what they shall, suggests to me this distribution of them into) *Politicians* and *Divines.*

The Politicians look upon the Dissenters as Easie to be brought in by other, surer, and (as they conceive) more Honourable means, than any Concessions from us. *Their Leaders*, say they, *are but few, (about a Dozen persons, who are sick of their Separation, and stand in need of a plausible pretence, under which to return* to the Church: *About an hundred men*, say others; though surely all vilely out in their Accounts.) Their *Followers* contemptible, and most of them of that Body, which we call the *Mobile:* A little time, they suppose, will wear off these old stubborn heads; and mean while a brisk and impartial Execution of Laws will fetch off most of the People, and hinder a new Growth or Succession; and thus the Faction in less than an Age become extinct. But *to gratifie the Pride*

Pride of a few men would be endleſs (for they would ſtill be at new Demands) and beſides very dangerous in encouraging for the preſent, and propagating for the future, the numerous Diſſenſions and their Intereſts. Thus ſome; Others (though much the fewer, but perhaps the wiſer, yet I fear it will be no wiſdom to leave it to the Event to determine which part is wiſeſt) Others I ſay, bid us take no notice of them; go on quietly in our way; Oppoſition, by a kind of Antiperaſtiſis, embodies, ſtrengthens, and ſo multiplies them. To ſuch purpoſes as theſe are the Diſcourſes of our men who pretend to an inſight into *Politicks*.

The Divines ſeem to judge, they are to be diſputed and reaſoned out of their Diſſenſion: and I muſt confeſs, they have uſed ſuch variety and ſtrength of Arguments, as if the thing were thus to be done, in all probability, would not have failed of effecting it. But I know not whether I may ſay of the Arguments on both ſides, what *Solomon* does of all Events, *There is nothing new under the Sun.* The *New Conformity*, as ſome are pleaſed to ſtyle it (that is, The New Subſcription, Declaration, Reordination, &c.) might perhaps, at its firſt Commencement, admit of ſome new Argument: But as to Conformity, as it ſtood by the old *Act of Uniformity* and *Canons*, the Queſtion has been ſo long agitated and ſifted ſo near, that at leaſt it is very hard to preſs any thing, which has not been ſaid before in one form or other; and by this time (that is, after near Twenty years debate) I may pretty ſafely ſay as much of the other; ſo far am I from being of Mr. *Baxter*'s mind, *That, as the Presbyterians may ſay, their Cauſe was never yet publickly pleaded; ſo may thoſe on the other ſide, who could*

could have yielded to the Old Conformity, but cannot to the New. Third part, p. 6. A ſtrange kind of Pleaders theſe! who think they are never heard, except they have their will. Alas! how little of new was there in *Smectymnuus* it ſelf? And afterwards, when the *Reaſons for Reformation* came forth, what had they of moment, which had not been pleaded by their famous *Cartwright*, my *Names-ſake*, Dr. *Ames*, and others, *Uſque ad Cramben*, long before? The *Argumenta ad homines*, which, of all ſorts of Argumentation, are ſtill likelyeſt to be new, we ſee ſignifie now not at all with them; they will not be concluded by the judgment or practice of their Anceſtors, no nor of their preſent Brethren; ſome of them not by their own at all times.

So that I muſt profeſs I utterly deſpair of ever ſeeing the Nonconformiſts diſputed into the Church; not through any Diffidence to our own Cauſe, or through any Inſufficiency or Suſpicion of our own Arguments, which, I ſay again, I can perceive no defect in, either, as to weight or number; but there is ſuch an incurable Tetter in the World as a *Diſputandi pruritus*, and a *Non perſuadebis, etiamſi perſuaſeris.* Nor have I any more hopes as to the ſucceſs of the Politick Methods. Theſe People have been tried long enough, and glory in that *Motto*, which one made the Title of a Pamphlet againſt them, *Semper Idem.* Hear what Mr. *Baxter* tells us, amongſt many other things to the ſame purpoſe, in that ſo oft cited Piece, *pag.* 195. *Experience telleth you, and all the World, that you are miſtaken* [*viz.* in thinking to reduce us by Violence] *We read the ſame Books in the Priſon, if there we may have them, as out of it. And what abundance of Miniſters within theſe Ten years have come out of*

long imprisonment in the same mind as they went in, yea much confirmed? But whom can you name that came out convinced? How long have they suffer'd not only poverty and reproach, but that silencing which they account a greater evil? And again, pag. 196. *In a word, I know, not only my self, but so many of the Nonconformable Ministers of* England *so well, that I utterly despair that ever silencing or imprisonment should change their judgments.* Much more he has to the same purpose, and what some would call more Resolute Bravado's. Then, as to the Extinction of the Faction by the death of these Leaders, see *pag.* 203. *They will choose to themselves Teachers and Pastors out of the best qualified of the People that survive* (for as to our Orders, they value them not, they have a new Notion of Ordination, fitted for their purpose; Ordination is nothing but a solemn Declaration to the Church, that such a Person is qualified for the Ministry, and so called thereto by Jesus Christ: nay, 'tis but a *Confirmation and Complement of the Peoples choice*, says *Ames*, *De Conscient. l.* 4. *c.* 25. *q.* 6. *A publick approving a man as fit to be a Minister, A solemn allowance of his Call.* J. H. p. 8. Mr. *Baxter* himself too is of the same mind, *Disput. pag.* 147. so that the People, or their Elders, hereby may lawfully ordein) *They will choose*, says he, *such, and will not lay down worshipping God according to their Consciences, though they were used for it as* Daniel *was, contrary to Law. And these new Pastors perhaps will have less Moderation than the old: And thus you will be troubled with a succession of Dissenters.* But I could have furnisht Mr. *Baxter* and the World, with another Confutation of this vain hope of the Extinction of the Faction by the death of their Leaders

Question of Reordinat.

Leaders: We ſhall never want a new Succeſſion of them, and thoſe violent too to the purpoſe, out of the ſame Nurſeries whence divers of the Preachers in the Field Conventicles lately in *Scotland* came: Thoſe Seminaries have been long enough ſo well ſtored, that they can afford us at any time Sholes of Teachers, Presbyterian Paſtors, Independent Paſtors, Anabaptiſt Paſtors, Millenaries, Quaking Holders-forth (men or women, choice without doubt). Kind Neighbours they are, and will at any time, and at all times, as long as they can keep up, *bring forth out of theſe their Treaſures*, able Leaders to the Factions *new and old*, and Teachers full of Zeal too, for each to their own hearts content, as we have too long had woful Experience, however ſlow of belief we have been.

But it will be returned upon me, To what end will it be then to ſeek to gain in to our ſelves the preſent Diſſenters? I anſwer; It is not to be thought that all of them will come in upon any terms whatſoever, but it may be hoped, the honeſt men will be pickt out of them, and ſtrengthen us by their Union; and the reſt of them will be diſcovered to be what they are; and no good men will p ty ſuch incorrigible perſons, if they fall under the laſh of ſevere Laws.

Now to this purpoſe I muſt ſtill inſiſt upon the *Expedient* propounded, as the only probable one, namely *Mutual Conceſſions* and *Approaches:* At the Conference at the *Savoy*, that Reverend and Great Man, Biſhop *Morley*, tells us, the Generality of the Non-conforming Divines *ſhewed themſelves unwilling to enter upon Diſpute, and ſeemed to like much better another way tending to an amicable and fair complyance, which was wholely fruſtrated by*——a cer- In his Letter p. 13.

tain persons *furious eagerness to ingage in a Disputation.* This was it seems the sense of both sides at that time: Now if compliance be likelyest to do the business, let us Relax a little on both hands, in the fear of God, and fall upon it. Let us candidly consult, what good Conscience, what Prudence will bear towards an Accommodation.

I am not so vain, as to take upon me to determine, nor scarcely so much as to point out, what is fit to be yielded: nor is there any thing of what is at present injoyned, which, I bless God, grates on me: There are some, who have told us, that had the *Cathedral way* of performing the daily Service been injoyned, as only the *Parochial* is, we had had many more Nonconformists: I seriously and cordially, on the contrary profess, That though by reason of my Age, the Cathedral Service was very strange to me at first, I never having known any such way of Worship till his Majesties happy Restauration, yet having immediately thereupon the advantage to understand it, and be conversant in it, I have since, a thousand and a thousand times, worshipped God therein *with my Soul and all that is within me*: I speak this not out of vanity, but in the fear of that God who knows my thoughts and heart, who shall judge me one day, and for his glory, and for the benefit of others who may be undeceived, or a little temperated in their Prejudices, by this my so solemn Profession and Protestation. To condemn without trial, we say, is unjust, but it is too usual; The holy Joy and Ravishment of Soul, which are truly to be found in this way of Worship, when voice and heart together sweetly ascend to God on high, the transports of Divine Love, and longings for that blessed Estate, wherein some such em-

employment of praiſing God, and ſinging to him will be at once the work and felicity of our Lives, the Contempt of the Senſual Life and Pleaſures, and the triumph Faith conceives over all things here below; Theſe, I ſay, and the like emotions of Soul towards God and Heaven, are with me Arguments for our grave Cathedral Muſick, never to be forgotten, never to be confuted. While I write theſe thing, I am ready to fall out into my

Awake up my glory, awake Lute and Harp; I my ſelf will awake right early, &c. Pſal. 57. 9, 10, 11, 12. Old Tranſlation.

Set up thy ſelf, O God, above the Heavens, and thy glory above all the Earth.

Oh! that ſome of the Nonconformiſts did but hear that Anthymn ſweetly ſung: I am very confident there are no ſerious ſober men amongſt them, who would be long Nonconformiſts to ſuch duly regulate Muſick'; and that they are ſo now, I cannot but impute it to prejudice of Education, want of Experience and of Exerciſe herein, and the like. The very Order in theſe Aſſemblies, to ſerious unprejudiced men, is a goodly ſight, and a little image of Heaven.

A fine aſpect in fit array,
Neither too mean, nor yet too gay,
Shews what is beſt.

Mr. *Herbert*, pag. 102.

And, in the ſame Divine Poets language, as to the Muſick it ſelf, when a devout Mind ſtrikes in with it, 'tis to ſuch the

Sweeteſt of ſweets,——
And knows the way to Heavens door.

Pag. 57.

I do not deny but that there may be faults in ſome peoples'

peoples vanity, looſneſs, want of ſerious, heavenly minds: But are there not theſe kind of people under all ſorts of Worſhip whatſoever? And do we not both teach and endeavour the Reformation hereof? I will not here recapitulate, what I have writ *elſewhere*, touching the ſerviceableneſs of *Quires*, as well to private Devotion, as to the holy Education of ſuch for the Miniſtry, who from their Infancy, through their whole Age, may ſerve God zealouſly in divers ſtations & capacities. I will, therefore, only add, That whatſoever is to be reduced, I can never think of conſenting to the aboliſhing (what ſome poſſibly will call *Conformity in Alt*) I mean the *Cathedral Service*. Nor do I find that it is deſired by the ſobereſt of the Nonconformiſts themſelves; witneſs the following Paſſage. *For the Ceremonies——I wiſh they might be left to the Conſciences and Prudence of Miniſters and People every where, *excepting the Cathedrals, to uſe them or forbear them, as they judge it moſt meet for one anothers Edification*, ſays the Author of the *Healing Paper, pag.* 30. And I queſtion not but many of his Brethren had approved this, as well as moſt of his other Propoſals, becauſe they were deſign'd to *Chalk out the way to the Parliament to open the Church door for ſober Nonconformiſts*. Anno 1678. Ep. to the Reader.

* So too, the Bill for Accommodation

But notwithſtanding what I have ſaid of the Excellency both of the *Common Prayers* themſelves, and of the *Cathedral performances*, I do not conceive the Alteration of an Expreſſion, or perhaps here and there, of a whole Prayer, or two, by Law, or the diſpenſing (ſtill by Law) with ſome Ceremony, *in loco*, for the ſake of ſome unſatisfied, but otherwiſe regular Chriſtians (who are not ſuppoſed of the Cathedral

thedral Body) I ſay, I do not conceive, ſuch Conceſſion or Relaxation as this, would break the Harmony and Beauty of our Worſhip, or diſturb the Union and Peace of our Church: I will therefore freely publiſh my thoughts to be, That whether we conſider the nature of the thing it ſelf, or with regard to the Apoſtles Rule (*Rom.* 15. 1,2.) *Not to pleaſe our ſelves, but every one of us to pleaſe his Neighbour, for his good, to Edification:* In either regard, I ſay, there are ſome *Collects*, and perhaps *Rubricks* too, which, with all duty and ſubmiſſion, I humbly conceive might be altered for the better. And further, That in ſome ſeaſons and in ſome private places, where Ceremonies want that Auguſtneſs which the advantage of Publick and great Congregations gives them (and in which kind of Aſſemblies they are chiefly requiſite) if the Obligation to a Ceremony or two were taken off, the Benefit which might hence redound to the Church would be very conſiderable, both in reſpect of Proſelytes and ſtrength thereby, as alſo perhaps in other Points. And I ſeem to my ſelf herein to follow the ſenſe and guidance of our Church; for even at preſent, the Injunction of the Ceremonies does not appear to me to extend it ſelf to all places and ſeaſons: As for inſtance; A Miniſter baptizes a Child in caſe of real Neceſſity in private, and he neither habits himſelf in his Surplice, *&c.* nor ſigns the Child with the ſign of the Croſs, and the Baptiſm is by the Rubrick declared *Lawful* and *Sufficient:* nor did the Miniſter offend in the Omiſſion of thoſe Ceremonies, becauſe no Law required them. In this particular then the Senſe and Spirit of our Church, touching the Places and Occaſions, which require Ceremonies, is ſufficiently apparent.

There

There are also divers other Points, which, when once the Design of a fair and complaint Accommodation shall be on foot, will be fit to be mentioned; and indeed will both of course offer themselves, and be, I judge, as easily granted; such are, the *Liberty* (which the Preface to the Second Book of Homilies allows) of *exchanging Apocryphal Lessons* for Canonical ones, any *Amendment* of such *defects* as can be proved (for all that is said cannot be proved) in the *Calendar*, The use of the most *correct Translation of the Psalms*, A better *Metrical Version* also, and perhaps some like matters; which, though we may account small, some Dissenters do not.

Without doubt, some such Mitigations proportionable might have been obtained, when that *Way tending to a fair and amicable composure* spoken of by the Right Reverend Bishop *Morley*, was not yet precluded: But now, as to the Dissenters (who perhaps expected another Game than they have found) it may be truly lamented, to use *Cæsars* words in a like case, *Accidisse his, quod plerumque hominibus nimiâ pertinaciâ atque arrogantiâ accidere solet, uti eò recurrant & id cupidissimè petant, quod paulò ante contempserint*; nor is it at present (though possibly they think, as they daily complain it is) in the Bishops power to help them: *Id possumus, quod jure possumus*. They who know any thing of our Constitution, know the Bishops are as much tyed, by the Laws, to the Observation of the Laws, as any Order of men whatsoever: And though some may say the Penalties upon us in this regard are small or rarely inflicted; yet, what Penalties operate in others, Conscience ought to do in us: And I see not how in Conscience we can dispense, when the Law allows no such

De Bell. Civil. Com. 1.

ſuch thing: for we know not the Miſchiefs, which may ariſe from ſuch our Laxneſs; and it would be a very unjuſtifiable preſumption, and beſides inconſiſtence with that mans ſelf, who pretends to obedience and ſubmiſſion to the Wiſdom of the Conſtitution, for him upon his ſingle judgment to over-rule the Dictates of that Wiſdom, that is, the Laws of the Nation. In plain Engliſh, when every one bears his own burthen, the hardſhip or rigour of the Laws, if any there be, is to be laid firſt at their doors, who by their Combinations had made it neceſſary for the Government, in its own defence, to break the knot; and then at theirs, who through refractorineſs, when they were asked what would ſatisfie them, replied and ſtood to it, *All or Nothing* (ſome men may underſtand this Language if they pleaſe). Nor are the Law-makers to be charged with ſeverity: Such aggrieved perſons, as I ſpeak to, can only thank themſelves, they have one Member of their fore-mentioned choice; though perhaps many of them, whom they take for their Enemies, are ſorry for it, beſides themſelves; and yet, I ſay again, not able to help them. For Laws neither can nor may be altered, (and Liturgies varied) as oft as men could wiſh: then perchance Government, as well as Laws, would be of very ſhort life.

Being then ſuch Alterations cannot be made in the Liturgy for the preſent, as might effect the deſign of *Union*, we muſt turn our ſelves in the next place to think what can be done. And here, firſt, it offers it ſelf, that one main Branch of the Subſcription and Declaration preſcribed in the Statue

for Uniformity, which ſtuck much with divers, relating to the Covenant, by the very Letter of the Statute, ceaſes within half a year: I truſt this may give eaſe, and perhaps open the door to ſome. And whether the ſame inducements, which ſwayed the Wiſdom of the Nation to prefix ſuch term for the expiration of that Clauſe, might not be as forcible towards the taking off another clauſe or two, which are ſcrupled by ſome, (Poſſibly it is as neceſſary other things ſhould be forgotten as the Covenant) whether alſo the Old Oath of Allegiance might not be ſo worded or explained as to ſerve in the room, not only of this Declaration, but of another new Oath too, I ſhall not adventure to propoſe: But this I will ſay, that the Clauſe touching the Covenant ceaſing of it ſelf, as beforeſaid, I do not ſee what is left in this Declaration or Subſcription, (call it as you pleaſe) which he, who is reſolved faithfully to keep the Oath of Allegiance, according to its true intent, need at all to ſcruple, except only that Branch of *Conforming to the Liturgy as it is now by Law eſtabliſht.* Yet this Obſervation, though it remove a ſuggeſtion which might afterwards have been objected, leaves us nevertheleſs where we were, ſticking (as ſome may account it) upon the Rock of Plenary Conformity to the Liturgy. This would ſeem now the only ſtop. For relief then herein, we muſt conſider whether there be no Mitigations or Lenitives to be found, without Repeal, or too diſhonourable Change of Laws, which we cannot expect.

And I know no fitter Clue in the Entrance of this Labyrinth, than the examining what has been offer'd hereto

hereto by any of the Diſſenters themſelves: for from them only, under God, we can tell what will pleaſe them. Amongſt all that have writ upon the Deſign of Accommodation, there is only one come to my Hand, that ſeems to me to offer any thing of Reaſon (more there may be whoſe Books reach not me here) I mean the Author of *The Peaceable Reſolution of Conſcience.* His Work ſpeaks him a man of Real Learning and Temper; and I wiſh his Brethren, who value themſelves above him, would learn of him. Now the ſum, as to the point in hand, which he propoſes, is; They *cannot*, he ſays, *give their unfeigned aſſent and conſent to every thing contained in the Liturgy* and Appendages, as the Statute requires; but they can *conſent to the Uſe of the Book in the Conſtant Lords-day Service.* And as to what *Exceptions they have againſt ſome things in the By-offices, the Occaſional Service, the Rubrick, and otherwiſe, they who ſcruple the performance themſelves, ſhall be ready to permit others to perform ſuch Offices to thoſe, who deſire them.* I do really believe him ſincere in this, and that he would not diſſwade or diſcourage People from the uſe and love of the Regular Offices, but let them injoy their freedom, being content with his own, could he enjoy it; though perhaps ſome will be apt to think, it would ſoon be otherwiſe generally, did this their Propoſal take. But notwithſtanding this my Charity, I muſt confeſs, I do not judge what he propounds ſufficient to qualifie men, (otherwiſe meet) for a Parochial Charge. My meaning is, this is no ways a tolerable meaſure of Conformity: For all they are thus ſuppoſed to conſent to, (and conſequently to

promiſe) being the uſe of the Conſtant Lords-days Service, they are not tyed (that I mention not yet occaſional Week day Prayers, Feſtival Services, even upon the Great Feſtivals, &c.) they are not tyed, I ſay, to, nor have we any Security they will obſerve, the very Forms of Adminiſtration of the Lords Supper, or of Baptiſm; and by this means we may have both Sacraments adminiſtred according to mens private pleaſure, which I think no one will judge ſufferable. Either then they muſt offer more Conformity to the Liturgy, than this mentioned amounts to, or not expect (as it is deſired in the Bill for Accommodation) *to be admitted to any Eccleſiaſtical Preferment, and injoy the uſe of their Miniſtry without Moleſtation.* This is a great defect, which I could not but note in that Writers Propoſals, as much as I like him otherwiſe. I know indeed he is for ſubſcribing the 39 Articles, &c. but that is Conformity to Doctrine; I ſpeak now meerly of Conformity to the uſe of the Liturgy, and, I ſay, his Propoſals herein are very ſhort of the great Deſign, Union: For if we be not united in Sacraments, how equivocal is the Union we pretend to?

I confeſs he has laid his Deſign with much more Modeſty, as to the Repeal and Change of Laws, than any I have ſeen: for an Explanatory Act (at leaſt what may be called fitly enough an Explanatory Act) of the Statute of Uniformity ſalves all: Let it but be allowed, by a favourable Interpretation from the Legiſlative Power, that ſuch a qualified or mitigated (indeed in our eſteem a very partial) Conformity to the Liturgy, ſhall be judged ſufficient for ſome purpoſes, and then naturally enough the Profeſſion

feſſion of Aſſent and Conſent may be alſo interpreted with proportion thereunto.

But there is yet another Defect, which I muſt challenge in the *Petition* or *Demand* made upon ſuppoſal of ſuch Conformity allowed by Authority, and performed by the Diſſenters: They deſire hereupon that *they may be admitted to any Eccleſiaſtical Preferment*. I ſay, here is one Limitation wanting to make it conſiſtent with what this Author himſelf propounded before; and after that another, or two perhaps, to make it conſiſtent with Reaſon and Equity. He had above propounded, That the *Ceremonies ſhould be left to the Conſcience and Prudence of Miniſters and People every where, excepting Cathedrals*: In theſe then, according to his own Propoſals, a Plenary Conformity is to be obſerved inviolable: But in his Petition or Poſtulatory part, he would have this new ſort of Conformiſts to be admitted, upon ſuch their Conformity, *to any Eccleſiaſtical Preferment*: To be conſiſtent with himſelf, he ought here to add, *Except in Cathedrals*; otherwiſe, by this Explanatory Act deſigned, we ſhould have Members, (at leaſt might have them) in Cathedrals, which cannot fully conform, and conſequently an Half-Conformity, or not that, would enſue there alſo.

Yet admit even this Limitation were put in, and then *Any Eccleſiaſtical Preferment*, will ſignifie Any *Rectory*, *Vicarage*, or as we uſe to ſpeak, Any *Cure of Souls*: I ſay ſtill, as before in-

intimated, it is very unreaſonable and unfit there ſhould be any Incumbents, to whom the Charge of Souls is immediately, according to Law, committed by the Biſhop, who ſhould not be bound to Adminiſter the Sacraments, to Bury the Dead, to Catechiſe the Youth according to the Church-Catechiſm (and prepare them thereby for Confirmation) to obſerve and celebrate, according to Order, the Great Feſtivals, as of our Lord's Nativity, Circumciſion, Paſſion, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, *&c.* all which Offices are evidently here excepted under the term of *by-Offices*. And the unreaſonableneſs hereof will further appear, if we conſider, that there are divers Pariſhes, wherein no ſmall part are diſaffected to Conformity: Theſe ſhall ſtickle hard for ſuch Miniſters, which when they have got, they ſhall only by their Practice (and poſſibly Doctrine too) be confirmed in their diſaffection; and theſe ſhall become Nurſeries of Nonconformity, and a proviſion thus made for the propagating Male-content againſt the Church: Now however, we would be willing to allow all favour to ſuch who unhappily already do in Conſcience diſſent, yet we can never agree to ſuch Methods, which will be ſure to perpetuate Diſſention: So that, except they throughly Conform, I think they ought not to deſire to be admitted to Parochial Cures, but only to Preach publickly as Aſſiſtants to ſuch Incumbents, who would imploy or accept them, or where otherwiſe there were want: And even herein alſo methinks there is need of another Limitation, *viz.* that whereas ſuch Preachers are ſuppoſed by Law indulg'd, or di-

diſpenſt with, as to their own Scruples, they give good Caution never to Preach againſt ſuch Uſages of the Church, which they Scruple, or to which they Conform not.

All then I can reaſonably ſay in this Caſe is, That if it could be obtained that the Subſcribing the Thirty nine Articles, the promiſing to read Orderly Morning or Evening Prayer reſpectively before Sermon, and receiving the Lord's Supper, at leaſt three times a year, according to the Order of our Church, might by Authority be interpreted a ſufficient Conformity to the Liturgy of the Church, to capacitate Perſons, otherwiſe fit and in Epiſcopal Orders, to preach publickly in ſuch and ſuch places (caution being firſt given to the Biſhop for the peaceableneſs of their Doctrine) I do not ſee but our Church doors will ſtand as open to the Nonconformiſts, as in Equity or Reaſon they can deſire; at leaſt as in ſafety the Church can allow. I muſt beg their pardon for ſaying no more (I cannot, with juſtice to my own ſenſe); and I ſhall ſcarce obtein pardon from ſome, for ſaying ſo much: but I thought it for the Publick Good, to ſay what I have; to which Publick Good we are all of us in duty bound to contribute all we can, whatever diminution we ſuffer in ſome mens eſteem.

I know it will be demanded of me, What need of letting theſe men in? Are there not Miniſters enow already, and more than are Honourably provided for? I anſwer, We ſhall have never the more

more for this Relaxation: Theſe men, in behalf of whom I have ſpoken, are in being already, and will preach ſome where or other; and 'tis better we had them in Publick than in Corners, that ſo the Church either had ſecurity for their peaceable doctrine, which I verily believe we may have as to moſt of them, or opportunities to convict them of their Sedition. But I have other-gueſs Arguments than theſe, that move me:

1. To thoſe who ask, What need of more Union? I return, What need of Holineſs? What need of Godlineſs, Charity, Juſtice? Are theſe Chriſtian Duties, and is not Union and Peace as much ſo?

2. I am and muſt be in the mind, that the ſtrength of the Proteſtant Cauſe, both here at home and throughout Chriſtendom, lies in the Union of Proteſtants; and the Glory, Purity and Power of Chriſtianity, in this World, ſtand or falls with Proteſtantiſm.

3. I muſt be ſo ingenuous as to acknowledge, That though perhaps the City, and divers particular Places, flouriſh with ſuch Preachers as never they had before, yet the way of Preaching in many parts of the Countrey, and in ſome no obſcure places too, might be much improved, and needs ſupply: And it can never be made out to the World, but it were better we had too many good Preachers, than too few.

I could tell ſome men in their ear, They alſo have ſtrangely multiplied *Curacies*, which are too often vacant: The Lord forgive them, and redreſs this great Evil in his Church. If I thought not theſe Arguments ſufficient, I would add more, which occur plentifully; but my Poſtſcript is too much ſwoln already.

I am not unſenſible, how difficult it will be to gain even this Point, which I have pleaded for, as ſmall as it ſeems to ſome: That it neither can, nor ought to be attempted, without the Legiſlative Power, I have ſaid often enough: And I conceive, the Diſſenters would do well by performing ſo much Obedience to the Laws, as they can to encourage and invite Authority to favour them, by a Relaxation in what they cannot. I will therefore, by way of Concluſion, make one Propoſal, which, above all yet done or ſaid, is the likelieſt means, in my opinion, to bring on an Accommodation. Mr. *Baxter* ſays (Part. 3. p. 8.) *Where he lived, he came to the beginning of the Churches Prayers, when he could, and ſtaid to the end:* And that peaceable worthy man above-commended (whom I know not, but whoſe name I found out, by comparing one Book with another) Mr. *John Humphrey*, the Author of both Pieces, touching *Reordination*, of the *Healing Paper*, and of the *Peaceable Reſolution*, &c. ſeems to offer for himſelf, and divers of his Brethren, not only *to uſe*, but to *ſubſcribe to the uſe of*, the *Liturgy*, as to *the Ordinary Lords-day Service*. It is plain then, that ſeveral of the Nonconformiſt

miſt Preachers, can in Conſcience uſe thus much of the Liturgy: yet I never heard, either that Mr. *Baxter*, when he preached publickly Occaſional Sermons (as he calls them, and to which, if I miſtake him not, he conceives his old Licence might authoriſe him ſtill) I ſay, I never heard, either he, or any other of his Brethren, did read any part of the Liturgy before any of their Preachings: That they ſtill frequently preach, I no whit queſtion: Now my Propoſal is, That *before all ſuch Sermons, at leaſt before their more Solemn Ones, on the Lord's days, they would reſpectively uſe the Morning and the Evening Prayer, which they thus acknowledge they could uſe, and ſubſcribe to the uſe of; and by their practice thus teach the People the lawfulneſs of ſo much Conformity.* I ſhould not doubt but ſuch frequent, reverent and ſerious uſe of it, would ſoon recommend it to their Conſciences, and to the Conſciences of all ſober perſons among them; and this practice would not only be an Argument, that they talk about Accommodation in good earneſt, but certainly prevail with the Biſhops to uſe their intereſt, and addreſs to his Majeſty in Parliament, for ſome ſuch Relaxation or *Explanatory Act* as is deſired. This would be ſomething of a coming nearer to us, and is but reaſonable in them, for that they expect we ſhould be moving towards them. But if they will ſtill totally hold off, and only tell us They can do thus and thus much, towards Peace, yet really do nothing, it is a very ſhrew'd ſign, either that there is not in them that Cordial deſire of Union they pretend to, or that their *Non-*

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conformity is more the Act and Resolution of their *Will*, than of their *Conscience*; which if it shall appear, they will for the future find less belief and fewer Favourers.

The End.